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G U J A R Á T A N D T H E
G U J A R Á T I S :

Pictures of Men and Manners
taken from Life.

THIRD EDITION,

BY

BEHRAMJI M. MALABARI.

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1889.

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PRESENTED

TO HIS HIGHNESS

The Maharaja Sahib of Gondal,

K.C.I.E., LL.D.,

FOR HIS LOVE OF TRAVEL AND OBSERVATION,

and for the enlightened liberality which, besides relieving his subjects of a number of harassing imposts, has provided a comparatively small State with Railways and other Public Works at an outlay that will soon go up to a hundred lakhs of rupees.

A P O L O G Y .

THIS third edition of *Gujarat and the Gujaratis* was promised nearly five years ago; but owing to pressing engagements, especially in connection with Social Reform, the publication had to be deferred month after month.

The author sincerely regrets this delay, and begs to apologize to subscribers in India and elsewhere, not a few of whom have probably forgotten the very title of this erratic little volume.

Bombay, September 1889.

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INTRODUCTION.

PERMIT me, gentle reader, to briefly explain the genesis of this little book. Starting on life's pilgrimage in the too early twilight of youth, I have often stumbled into dry nulláhs* —very dry and dismal, and with very steep sides. And in groping my way to reach the other side, I have scratched and cut myself badly. But it is matter for thankfulness to be able to say that in none of my stumbles have I broken any bones. However bad the fall, I have always managed to pick myself up; and, with the rope thrown down by friendly hands, have struggled up the stony hill-side. These roughs and tumbles of life have become a part of my nature, and I have often felt a vague sort of conviction that life would be scarcely worth living without some prospect of having to rough it.

A POOR BEGINNING.

I began life at twelve, giving private lessons. One scarcely feels at ease in coaching his elders.

* Empty water-courses.

It was a poor beginning. At sixteen I became a regular teacher. I had seen enough of the world before this—the world of Surat, that is. I entered upon my new duties, therefore, with hearty interest. The work did not feel a drudgery for some time ; but two or three years after, my migratory instincts again asserted themselves. I felt that I wanted a change. I had taught and studied children long enough, and I thought I must now study “children of a larger growth.”

A TEMPTING OFFER.

At this time I was offered the joint-editorship of a local (English) weekly. I jumped at the offer, and submitted it to a few friends whom I used to consult on matters beyond my management. These gentlemen, each and all, scouted the idea, and strongly advised me to keep where I was.

MY TROUBLES.

Here began my troubles. I had already been favourably known as a versifier ; and with the overweening confidence of youth, thought I had the right and the power, too, to enlighten

the public on political and other topics of the day. There was nothing for it, however, but to bow to friends' decision, once having sought their advice. During the next two years I had the most miserable time of it. They made me a morose, disconsolate verse-monger. I scribbled English verses by the yard; and after destroying the bulk of them, ventured to publish a few pieces. But no end of verse-writing could compensate for the glorious chance I had missed of becoming a journalist and public censor. However, I received fresh overtures soon after.

STRUGGLES OF A CHEAP NEWSPAPER.

It was a cheap weekly, hitherto owned by two partners, cousins, one who had given it money, the other brains. Two more partners were added, my friend N. bringing money, and I supposed as supplying brains. The work was fairly divided—the first proprietor, D., a small clerk, undertook business management. N. was to help D., and also to make himself useful to us—my friend P. and myself—in the literary business. For a week or two all went on smoothly; but we soon felt the necessity of discussing our position. N. was a man of tem-

per, and among other things "compositors" did not take kindly to him. I received frequent complaints as to his harshness; but knowing he had brought us the sinews of war I could do nothing more than appeal to his good sense. On Saturday night Mr. N. was given a "proof" to read. He corrected it; but instead of entering corrections on the margins, poked his pen into the body of the "composed matter." The compositor, of course, could not follow such corrections, and the paper was delayed next morning. On Sunday, when we four proprietors met, I gently asked Mr. N. to be good enough to enter corrections, in future, on the margins of the proof-sheet. N. glared at me for what he took to be an insult, and replied that he had paid Rs. 1,000 to be his own master—that he would do just what *he* liked, and would not be bullied by people who had not contributed a pie. This sneer was passed over by me; but the co-editor winced under it, and replied hotly to N.'s insinuation. What threatened to be a bad quarrel was, however, soon made up; and we all adjourned to an adjoining hotel to discuss the future of the paper and a substantial breakfast provided for the occasion, I forget by whom.

EDITORIAL VAGARIES.

But by-and-bye we two editors could not quite agree between ourselves. I was for treatment of social questions chiefly ; my friend P. affected politics. We settled this difference by confining each to his own *forte*. Our ignorance, even in this, was as boundless as was our arrogance. But was it not glorious to criticise and ridicule leading men in the country ? What a privilege for too-early-emancipated school-boys ! Nothing could be easier than my share of the literary work : I turned into prose, every week, two of my versified social essays, of which I had a large supply at home. Did poet ever sacrifice his substance as I did, in those days, in the public interests ? My sweet sonorous hexameters surrendered bodily to the manipulations of the dirty P. D. ! No martyr could do more. My friend P. wrote political essays. He was decidedly better-read than I. Besides he took pains with his essays ; but how could a young man of less than twenty overtake topics which baffle the grasp of veterans ? One day, writing, I believe, of the battle of Plevna, P. asked me what was meant by "the Porte." I explained "the Porte" might be the Sultan of Turkey's principal wife. P. thought it was

only the European title of the Khedive of Egypt. We often thought and wrote in that curious way.

EDITORIAL AMENITIES.

This could not last ; and one evening P. suggested, in council, that our capitalist partners should get a few reference-books for the editor's table. Mr. N. refused to pay for our "extravagance." I submitted, as chairman, that we were neither of us extravagant, and that Mr. N. was wrong. Hereupon he brought definite charges against us. P. replied to the accusations and N. retorted, winding up rather suddenly with a demand for his money. P. was dum-founded, but he soon found courage to ask N. if he meant really to be so "perfidious." N. replied, with equal ferocity, "Return my money this minute." "Very well," coolly said P., taking up N.'s new turban and throwing it out of the window, desiring its owner to leave instantly, on pain of being sent after the turban by the same means of exit. But N. did nothing of the sort. He took P. by the throat and demanded the satisfaction of throwing out *his* turban. "It is my right, give me my right," he shrieked, "and then I'll leave."

Here they closed. They tugged and lugged, tore each other's clothes, and mauled each other very prettily. It was with the utmost difficulty that the young Tartars could be separated. And the two—once intimate friends and college chums—have never since been on speaking terms. That evening, in the presence of servants and neighbours, who had come up on hearing of the *fracas*, the chairman sobbed audibly in his editorial and presidential chair, at all his hopes of fame and fortune having vanished so suddenly. One could put up with light inconvenience, such as of working as compositor, reader, printer, distributor, manager, editor and so forth, all offices rolled into one. But this exposure—oh it was too, too cruel !

But crushing as the disappointment was, it enabled me to cast about for some equally powerful distraction. I had long cherished the hope of visiting Gujarát and Káthiáwár with some definite business views, and having, at this juncture, received an offer from a friend, I accepted it thankfully.

A POOR PROGRAMME.

This personal explanation has been given, reader, to warn you against expecting too much

from my book. Now that you know me, I know you will not be too exacting. If you are curious to revel in the luxury of deep and learned research, I must frankly refer you to *Oriental Memoirs*; to Forbes, Briggs, Ferishta, and such others, with whom my acquaintance is of the slightest, barely sufficient to make me know my place. If you want to refresh, and at the same time to enlighten your mind, you had better turn to the picturesque details of the gifted *padre** Heber. Should you wish to have correct statistics and authenticated accounts of this Presidency, I could safely recommend you to pore over Mr. J. M. Campbell's *Bombay Gazetteers*. In these prodigious results of editorial labour you will find a forest of facts and figures which you can traverse leisurely, till you become another Hunter,† a prince of particulars, a very king of quotations. But if you care to have a fresh account of, perhaps, the least known but most interesting parts of Her Majesty's Indian Empire, of the inner life of an important people, their habits, customs, manners, the moral and social forces at work

* Applied, in India, to Christian missionaries, preachers or priests.

† The Hon. Sir W. W. Hunter, formerly Member of the Governor-General's Council, Director-General of Statistics to the Government of India, &c., &c.

among them, then you are welcome to these pages, such as they are. You will have to be content with rough, hasty sketches, but generally taken on the spot—sketches from real life. I would not promise you much of system and order—because, you see, this is not an Official Report. A number of these sketches appeared, at the time, in the *Bombay Review*, and are all the better for having received touches here and there from the accomplished editor. Not a few of them were, indeed, undertaken at the suggestion of that veteran journalist.* These sketches, and a few more contributed to other papers, are here put into shape, intermixed with extracts from letters to friends and the contents of a rough diary—all strung together on a rather slender narrative thread.

I do not mind confessing, reader, that this is a poor sort of programme. But it is, perhaps, as well it is so. I may also prepare you for a little exaggerated expression, wherever the writer is “intense.” But you will not find cause to question my *bonâ-fides*. In spite of occasional levity, no writer ever meant to be more serious. If you follow my sketchings in

* Mr. W. Martin Wood, formerly Editor of the *Times of India*, and of the *Bombay Review*.

the spirit and the letter, if you read between the lines, you will not find them all mere caricatures.

The first edition of *Gujarât and the Gujarâtis* was brought out under serious disadvantages. The MS. had to be sent off to London unrevised, and revision of proofs was out of the question. An attempt was made in the second edition to correct misprints, supply omissions, and to check the tendency of some of the observations to appear too sweeping. The glare of paint which disfigured one or two of the "pictures" has now made room for sober tints. But though the form has been in some instances modified, the matter is substantially the same. For what defects still remain the critic would do well not to condemn the workman for the poverty of his materials.

Several new chapters have been added to this third edition to suit different tastes. These chapters could be easily elaborated for a larger volume. The rough illustrations might serve as "aid" to readers who have never been to India. These are the best that could be obtained on the spot, not, however, without many trials by friends in the profession. The experiments so far did not justify a more serious effort.

In conclusion, the author may be allowed to say that, though his book is intended to deal with Gujarát only, many of the larger descriptions and general observations apply equally well to other parts of the country.

TRAVEL AND STUDY.

I am now and then asked by European friends how often I have been to England, and how long I have stayed there altogether. And when I protest that I have never been out of India, my friends shake their heads knowingly. The fact is, I have my own ideas of travel, as more or less of everything else. The first tour I remember having made was, of course, round grandmother's kitchen parlour. Thence I transferred my attentions to the front-yard of the house, thence to the street, the neighbouring street, the whole suburb of Nanpura and the surrounding suburbs; next the Camp and the villages beyond. The climbing of trees and roofs, in search of paper kites, was another round of useful tours. Next to climbing of trees and roofs, swimming or fording the Tapti, and running over to Bhatha, Rander, Adajan and other *gaums** was also a means of touring.

* Outlying villages.

My early local tours were often extended to Udna, famous for toddy. My last long tour from Surat was a walking match to Nowsari. From Surat and its districts I have passed on to Gujarát generally, and from Gujarát on to Kathiáwar and Kutch. I have seen much of India during the last seven years, but Gujarát and Kathiáwar I know best. Much of these two provinces I have done on foot, and with my eyes open. And a good deal of my experience is the result of hard tramping. I hope one day to finish India from end to end; and then, who knows that I may not go to Europe, America and the rest? Less likely things have happened.

But whether I go on the grand tour or not, I will never give up my habit. In study, as in travel, it is best to begin at the very beginning and to proceed by slow stages, gaining something at every stage, and that something such as to be of immediate practical use on the next stage. This is the only way of travelling and studying. Your globe-trotter will laugh at my antiquated method, but he cannot deny its advantages. When you travel or study by degrees, every fresh step or item of knowledge is a keen enjoyment. You are prepared to receive it, and thus received, your knowledge will fruc-

tify. But when knowledge is thrust upon you without previous discipline, that is, without your being made fit for it, it will lie inert and unleavened. What is the use of visiting foreign countries when you know nothing of your own? When you go to Europe, ignorant of your own national life, you will miss those thousand points of comparison and contrast, those thousand shades of difference, those thousand beauties and blemishes that modern European civilization presents. At the best, you will *look at* things, not *see* or *see through* them. Knowledge is best acquired, take my word for it, by the comparative method. And what will you compare your new acquirements with when there are not half a dozen home ideas in that empty head of yours? You go to see the Windsor Palace and are lost in admiration at the sight. Have you seen Agra? Had you seen some of the architectural glories of your own country, you might, at any rate, have controlled your faculty for admiration. You might have been quite at liberty to admire the structure, but at the same time, you could have seen what beauty it has which the palaces of India do not possess, and *vice versâ*. The same is the case with study. If you learn Greek after learning Sanskrit, Persian or Arabic, you will enjoy the

process, recognise the advantage of one over another ; and though you may admire the European classic as much as you like, you will have no reason to be ashamed of your own. I honour you for your desire to examine the arts, sciences and philosophies of the West, but you cannot do this with advantage to yourself and the world unless you have already made yourself familiar with the national systems. The worst result of this method of travel and study that I am complaining of is, that it gives a man poor ideas of everything in his country in proportion to the exaggerated notions he imbibes about other countries. This is a charge from which very few of our England-returned men can escape. It makes one sick to hear a man rave about this thing or that 10,000 miles away, when a much better, perhaps the original, thing is lying unnoticed at his very door !

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GUJARAT

AND

THE GUJARATIS.

S U R A T :

ITS FABLED ORIGIN.

WE left Bombay for Surat—I and my old servant Rasul—on the 13th of March 1878. Rasul's services were lent to me by my esteemed friend, Mr. D. F. Cama, with whom he had spent many years in pleasant travelling. Surat is as good as my native land, I having lived there from two to fifteen years of age. Its *genus loci* has been hallowed to me by association. The bones of a hundred ancestors are this day bleaching in the awful chasms of the Towers of Silence. Memory is besieged by the shadows of a thousand incidents when I find myself in the midst of old haunts, where, for an

hour or a day's pleasure, I have passed months or years of bitter privations. I know Surat intimately, from end to end, and, notwithstanding the utmost ingenuity of patriotic bards and encomiasts, and the good-natured credulity of European *savants*, I do not think we can give Surat a fabled origin, linking her name with the glorious Souráshtra of old and making her one of the territorial galaxy which shed lustre on the arms of the valiant Rajput who swayed the destinies of, perhaps, twenty million human beings scattered over an area of more than fifty thousand square miles, and who traced his descent to the early Aryan fathers, the first discontented wanderers from the cradle-land of our race. Vanity and self-love seek to indentify this town of Surat with the far-famed Souráshtra which has been in existence time out of mind, and which embraced, perhaps, a hundred times the area of Surat. By some curious trickery of nomenclature, that which was known as Souráshtra is now come to be known as the Peninsula of Kathiawar, whilst others say that it is Souráshtra on the side of which now stands Junághar, the capital of the Bábi Mahomedans. Surat may be a feeble and corrupt imitation of Souráshtra. Taking it any way, Surat was nowhere before the thirteenth century A. D.

STRANGE VICISSITUDES.

It seems to have been built under Mahomedan auspices. It derived its former importance from its maritime situation, which afforded peculiar facilities, not only for a vast sea-borne trade, but for hordes of well-to-do Mahomedan pilgrims sailing for Meccá. Surat has a curious and touching history; but this is not the time to call up visions of its past glory. Its career reads like that of the beautiful Eastern slave, whom Chance leads from one enamoured master to another, till the lovely captive has well-nigh lost her power to please. From the Ahmedábád Mahomedans, probably its first owners, it passed into the hands of Akbar, "first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen." But the deputies of the Grand Mogul could not retain the prize long; it passed successively into the hands of the mercenary Dutch, the fiery Lusitanian, the marauding Mahráttá, till the same Chance placed it in the hands of masters who, hailing from the land of the free, claim freedom and justice as the objects of their mission to the East.

SURAT OF TO-DAY.

Surat was a right jolly place a century ago, though even then it was in the afternoon of its

glory. But "something ails it now." Its rapid ruin since can be traced to disastrous fires and floods, to the drying up of the Tapti, and to the rise and prosperity of the island town of Bombay. Surat of to-day is a shadow of its old self, its stout commercial spirit gone, the well-to-do of its citizens grovelling in indolence or pleasure, its social status decayed and still decaying. The British are doing much to infuse new life into this prostrate capital of their original possessions in the Western Presidency. Enlightened and equitable administration of justice, well-worked medical and educational agencies, wise schemes of municipal improvement; these are all tangible reforms, and have a leavening tendency on the almost deadened national conscience. But the instincts of the people seek repose: it is incompatible with a true Surti* nature to keep pace with the march of progress. The labouring and agricultural classes have ample security of person and property; but I doubt if they enjoy that progressive prosperity which is the true criterion of a settled and enlightened rule. The fact seems to be that the English are dosing India with too much law. The laws are too many and too fine to be equitable in a community of mutually antago-

* Native of Surat.

nistic classes and conflicting interests, unused to a complex machinery. And worse than the laws themselves is the working of them. Except in this, I do not think the people have any real cause for grumbling; and I am sure they seldom grumble, my poor, primitive, peace-loving Surtis.

A FEW HONEST GROWLS.

Coming to a class higher, I mean the middle class, what strikes the observer most is this: the rising generation are given every facility and inducement for acquirement of a fairly liberal education. Such education naturally widens their vision and gives play to their innate aspirations. But when they attempt to assert their position as politically and socially the equals of the ruling class, they are often ridiculed for their presumption! Not only are our educated men so many political pariahs,* but in ordinary social matters they are made to feel their inferiority. Those thousand little social charities, which might reconcile them to standing political disabilities, are withheld from them as a matter of course. In public, as well as in private, the best of natives must know his place,

* Degraded homeless outcasts.

when in the presence of the white Sáheb. It is the old, old story of might being the better of right. It may be allowed that some distinction of the sort is inevitable. But really, it is neither necessary nor expedient to keep up this spirit of exclusiveness. I am painfully aware of the evil effect of Caste ; but beyond a bare suspicion one does not see what Caste has to do directly with the absence of cordiality between natives and Europeans. English society, let us by the way bear in mind, is not free from Caste prejudices. I am in full accord with writers who trace part of the present state of things to the backwardness of female education among natives. I think too much has been made of the progress of this branch of education in the country—in reality it is not much to speak of. Is it not a mockery to speak of female education in a country suffering from the curse of infant marriages ? But though it is devoutly to be wished that woman in India soon came up to the level of man, I despair of any improvement in the relations between the two races from mere social causes. An approach to friendliness is barely possible under social conditions when the native becomes more liberal and the Englishman less exclusive, especially if the latter makes the advance. But even when

that happens, the benefit will be skin-deep. For real and lasting good we must look to the political advancement of the people of India. The Englishman will never care for the Hindu unless he knows him to be his equal. Nothing can bring about brotherly regard so well as this sense of equality. As it is, the native is looked down upon as an inferior. No wonder, then, that on the social platform, too, the European resents difference of opinion on the part of the native, discounts candour, and lays a premium on servility. Under the circumstances I ask if there is any reasonable ground for improvement of relations? With his sense of political superiority the Englishman may be excused for declining to meet the native socially on a footing of equality. As in other matters, so in this, our friends have tried to keep up appearances by expedients. These may serve the purpose for a time—concerts and dinners and cricket look well enough in their way. But there is an end to all such makeshifts; and when the end comes, the races are left, perhaps, further apart than they were. Let the truth be recognised that we are both subjects of the same Sovereign, amenable to the same law and recipients of the same grace. Let this identity of interest be admitted, and equality and friendship will come of themselves. I

am convinced that the question under discussion is more for the statesman than the sentimentalist.

One more growl whilst I am in this stern preaching mood (it is seldom that I preach) at the levelling policy of our officials. No doubt, there must be one law for rich and poor. This policy is unexceptionable in the abstract and the higher sphere of affairs. But in practice, in the minor details of life, where the rich can feel and the poor *cannot*, it would be obvious injustice to make no distinction between the high-born and the low-born. This proposition may shock the philosopher ; but as the world goes, I am afraid it holds good as much in Europe as in India. If it is the interest of a wise ruler to see the poor rise, it is equally his interest to see the rich do not fall. Here in Gujarát we know of hundreds of young men of rank and talent who are treated by the officials with studied indifference. And what is the result ? The flower of the generation, finding no scope for their talent and no respect for their birth, degenerate, by degrees, into profligates and malcontents. In a country where rank and title are the prizes of life, those who claim a titled ancestry are generally worshipped by the masses. The people

themselves are loyal to the core, though much puzzled by sudden and new-fangled administrative changes ; but the number of the educated high-born, who feel they are neglected or despised, is on the increase. Let our Collectors and Judges see to this. I do not wish to meddle with politics here ; but this particular complaint is so widespread in Gujarát, and indeed throughout British India, that a mention of it could not well be avoided. A word to the wise.

LOCAL CELEBRITIES.

I made a very brief stay this time at Surat, and saw only a few of the local magnates. The most important amongst these may be considered the Nawáb of Belá and Meer Gulám Bárá Khán, or as they are popularly called, Bará (big) Sáheb and Chotá (little) Sáheb. I made the latter's acquaintance under somewhat painful circumstances. Travelling together one day, I learnt by accident that my companion was Meer Gulám Bárá. There were four of us in the compartment—Meer Gulám, his secretary, a European, and myself. Now, it so happened that the European, not knowing Meer Gulám, went to sleep with his boots in Meer Gulám's lap. The Meer, unwilling to provoke a quarrel, quietly moved further from under the insulting

encumbrance. The European hereupon accused him of having disturbed his rest, and fired off a volley of ear-splitting abuses. The poor Meer held his tongue, though I could see from the working of his face that his blood was up. But the European, thus emboldened, took the Meer by the arm and attempted to push him out of the carriage. Here I interfered, and after a good deal of explanation, I got the European to desist from annoying the nobleman. The man went to bed again, muttering "I don't care a hang who he is." I hinted to the Meer that he might have met the bully with more spirit; but he mildly replied in Hindustani, "We have had our day; these people have their day now, you see?" After this philosophic remark, we dropped the unpleasant subject and became good friends for the day. We exchanged some fine oriental compliments at parting, but have never met since. The Meer has been a Municipal Commissioner for years and is now (1888) President of the Municipality. They say he does not know English; that is not the worst drawback in a civic father at Surat.

The other Meer, a rival, I never got to know except as a curiosity. He is said to be a good

natured, pleasant spoken gentleman, much given to what may be called pleasures of the palate.

Amongst Parsi celebrities of Surat is Khan Bahádur Burjorji Merwanji Fraser,* a worthy old gentleman, who has run through a fortune in a very fashionable way, but not without behaving handsomely in making gifts to his native city, as is duly described in Murray's new *Handbook of India (Bombay)*, and other records of the time. Shett Burjorji is a Khan Bahádur.

There is another Parsi Khan Bahádur at Surat, who has made himself as famous as mortal man could be. Khan Bahádur Mody Dávar Rustomji Khorshedji, Esquire, Justice of the Peace, Honorary Magistrate, and the rest, seems to be a character in his way. His one ambition in life is to be known as the supreme head of the Parsis throughout India and Persia. With this view he will wait upon the new Collector or Judge with musty old documents proving him the direct descendant of Yezdezard, the last Zoroastrian king of Persia, and by inference, of course, of Zoroaster, Jamshid and others. All this is harmless enough, and

* Since deceased.

European officials generally pass a pleasant hour in humoring the amiable Mody Sáheb. But his enemies, the bulk of the Parsi community, spoil the fun by defining the word "Mody" as a grain-supplier. This is cruel; but though the dictionaries are on the side of the enemies, the Mody Sáheb knows he has the officials on his side, all except the Hon'ble Mr. Hope, (now Sir T. Hope) who appears to have declined all odes, addresses and pious benedictions from our representative of Zoroaster and Jamshid. Personally, I think, the Mody of Surat is a worthy soul, and as for his love to trace his family to Zoroaster, that is nothing to my friend Moonshi Lutfullah's genealogy prepared by himself, modestly taking up his race, by twenty steps, from Lutfullah, Moses, Abraham, up to Adam himself! The only difference is that Moonshi Lutfullah has concocted his pedigree to tickle his European readers, while Mr. Mody religiously believes the story handed down from his fathers. His family name, I believe, is Dávar, though he belongs to a younger branch of the Mody family at Bombay. He is as amiable, as he is well informed. So is his brother, Mr. Edalji who is blessed with a family of most intelligent sons.

Notable amongst the Hindus is my friend Ráo Bahádur Jugjiwandás Khusháldás. As Full-Power Magistrate he showed himself sturdy and plain-spoken, and a terror to evil-doers. Mr. Jugjiwandás rendered valuable service to the public of Surat during the recent flood. He was amongst the first to organise relief works, and the Central Committee owed much of their success to his guidance. Mr. Jugjiwandás enjoys the confidence generally of the Government and the people alike. I should not, also, forget the Surat editors, well-known throughout India for their connection with the great (License-tax) Riots Case. They appear to be the very embodiment of the "mild Hindu" type, but conceal a good deal of energy and determination under a rather unpromising exterior. The late Mr. Kikabhai Prabhudas was, perhaps, as notable a man as was Mr. Joshi of Poona.

But my best friends at Surat are the Irish Presbyterian missionaries, Dixon, Wallace, Montgomery, Taylor—alas, they no longer *are*! William Dixon, my own revered master, died a young man. One could see at first sight that he was a scholar and a martyr. He effected much good at Surat; and though death too

soon cut short a career of brilliant promise, his influence is felt even now to be at work.

William Wallace was our Bible teacher—a man of great benevolence and learning. I have never seen a man so gentle in spirit and so unruffled under provocation. His life was a blessed example to us all.

Much differing from Mr. Wallace, but actuated by the same motive, was the Rev. Robert Montgomery. Mr. Montgomery was, I believe, the oldest Presbyterian missionary to Gujarát, and spent the best days of his life there. He died at home, in the fulness of time, at the patriarchal age of three score and ten, leaving behind the memory of a virtuous and well-spent life to be cherished by three generations of men. The deceased was a most successful preacher of the Gospel. He hated all underhand and dubious means ; and rather than fire up the imagination of his audience by the glitter of false hopes and impossible promises, he preferred to reach their conscience by making Christianity a necessity of man's fallen nature. His Christianity was of a peculiar character, like himself, pleasant, practical and conciliatory. Wherever he could, he cheerfully fell in with the views of his opponent ; where he could not,

he would not mind pulling Satan himself by the beard, keeping himself and the adversary all the while in the best humour. Anecdotes are current in Gujarát of how the good old man would sallie forth of a Sabbath morning, enter an unknown village, preach against the stone-gods, set upon by the mob and incarcerated for his audacity : how he would hold forth from his prison—now in muscular Hindustani, reminding the populace of their unlawful conduct and its consequences ; now in suasive Gujaráti, laughing at their despicable tactics ; and then suddenly asking for a drink of water, and directly going off to take his forty winks ; falling to the recital of some quaint but touching prayer on awaking ; till at last he would win the hearts of the people, issue forth, all smiles and bows, snap his fingers at the heathen priest who had instigated the rabble, and set out for home, often after a supper of warm milk and bread, escorted by the very men who had, a few hours ago, put him into the cow-shed prison ! Such was Robert Montgomery, the missionary.

Yet one more. The Rev. Van Someren Taylor. This very day, 27th June 1881, as I am sitting down to record my sense of his

worth, I hear of his sudden death at Edinburgh. I had not the honour of being one of his pupils. But Mr. Taylor did that for me which he scarcely could have had the opportunity of doing for many others. To him I am indebted for my success as a Gujaráti writer. He was my first literary guide and friend. He was the first to approve what had been neglected by many others ; and but for his encouragement, I am not sure if I could at all have ventured to publish my works in the face of general discouragement.

Mr. Taylor was essentially a missionary, a devoted and indefatigable worker, a genuine scholar and a genial friend. I believe that the success of the little colony of Christian converts at Borsad* is mainly due to Mr. Taylor's exertions and influence ; at any rate, he is acknowledged its most faithful friend. To his many other acquirements Mr. Taylor added a very intimate knowledge of the Gujaráti vernacular. His Gujaráti grammar is the best for students of all classes, and is, I believe, a standard work. He wrote excellent Gujaráti verses, and has published one or two volumes. Besides the fine Christian sentiment running through them, his lines are remarkable for purity, warmth, and

* A little town near Ahmedabad.

simplicity. Many of them I have heard sung with very good effect. In his work as a missionary and a citizen, he won confidence and sympathy wherever he went ; and though very quiet and retiring by nature, he was ever ready to advance, by word and by deed, the cause of education and enlightenment. In the case of many a struggling young man, Mr. Taylor's kindly encouragement has been actually the making of a life of usefulness.

Another Gujarát missionary of much promise was the Rev. Mr. Wells, who also died at a comparatively early age. He, too, was a good Gujaráti scholar, and has written several works in that vernacular, which are not only popular, but are recognised as first-rate school-books. Mr. Wells was a very zealous, active man, and known for his rough practical benevolence.

Of European officials, the best remembered by men of this generation are Mr. (now Sir) T. C. Hope,* the Collector *par excellence*, and Mr. H. M. Birdwood—the judge. Surat is greatly indebted to Mr. Hope for numerous practical

* Public Works Minister and Member of the Governor-General's Council.

reforms. Stern and almost overbearing in his official relations, he despised false popularity, and though sometimes carried away by over-zeal, his honesty of purpose has never been questioned. Though smarting under some of his hasty measures, the Surtis readily acknowledge that "Hope Sáheb" has been the second founder of the city.

Mr. Birdwood* is popularly known as a model judge. He is no less a favourite with the official circle than with the public. He is "as good as a native, *one of us*," the people explain. I know of no greater compliment that could be paid to an official. And this praise is amply justified by Mr. Birdwood's love for the people, and his readiness to identify himself with every movement, private or public, for their advancement.

I must not forget two other popular officials—a Judge and a Collector again. The former, a native, Mr. Satyendranath Tagore, is one of the ablest civilian judges, whose decisions are often remarkable for their soundness and acumen. Coming of a race of reformers and

* Now Mr. Justice Birdwood of the High Court at Bombay.

benefactors, Mr. Tagore very well sustains the traditions of his family. Wherever he goes, he devotes his best endeavours to the enlightenment of his countrymen. He is the idol of the Gujaráti people. In private life he is simple and modest, quite a *Sádhú*,* as a friend describes him. Mr. Tagore is, I believe, the first native Civilian who passed the competitive examination in England.

Another official is Mr. A. Borradaile. A great deal of energy and good sense has characterised his administration of Gujarát. Mr. Borradaile has read the native character pretty accurately, and he seems to know equally well how to apply his knowledge. The first thing almost that he had to attend to on his arrival at Surat was a formidable conspiracy of the grain-dealers to run up prices. It was a sight to see the Collector walk up to the grain-market, button-hole the leading daláls,† and lecture them out of their unholy league. Nothing stronger passed between them than friendly remonstrance, but it had its effect ; though the more forward of the brokers quoted Bentham, Mill, and other advocates of Free-Trade. Mr. Borradaile is an out-and-out Anglo-Indian, as

* An ascetic.

† Brokers.

was his learned and highly respected father, Harry, of that ilk, who compiled a valuable work on the castes of this province.

Let me not omit here Sayed Edroos,* of Surat, who is an Honourable and a C.S.I. This Moslem of many titles was in the Governor's Council for some time, but his legislative career was blank as a sheet of blotting-paper—or at best imprinted with the impressions of others. He could hardly discuss any subject (1) because he is ignorant of English, and (2) because his ideas of his duty are so very original. He thinks he serves his country best by nodding assent to whatever falls from the Sáheb's lips. Is it strange, then, that the Sáheb should love him dearly? Is it strange, then, that the Collector should try to give Sayed Edroos another lease of life as Councillor to Sir James Fergusson? But this sort of happy-family arrangement will not do in our days. The Sayed Sáheb is an exploded myth. He has ceased to believe in himself, and even his existence has become a matter of doubt. The Gujarát people, therefore, will have none of him. The Presidency protests against the contemplated jobbery of a second term for the

* Since deceased.

Sayed. They say "Let us have anybody else,—Mr. Camu Sulliman,* or even Ismal Khán, butler to the Collector of Cobbleabad; but no Sayed Edroos"—they have had enough of his name in official reports of "Members present."

As worthy a man as the Sayed is† a certain Mohlá‡ of this province. The Mohláji or Mullaji is at present in hot water. He is the head of a Mahomedan sect very numerous in Gujarát and Bombay, and is therefore kept in good condition. For a long time he was considered the safest and most liberal banker at Surat; and people of all classes deemed it a privilege to leave money with the Mohláji. Many a poor widow disposed of a house or other property, and entrusted the assets to the Mohlá. About ten years ago something was found wrong with the Mohlá's affairs, and creditors flocked to his holiness to withdraw their money from under the trust. But this was no easy work. The Mohlá begged for a reprieve. After a good deal of bickering, and yielding to threats of exposure, some of the Mohlá's friends undertook to wipe off the debt

* A wealthy and enterprising upholsterer, and a good friend to impecunious subalterns.

† Written six years ago.

‡ A Mussulman leader and priest.

by eight annual instalments. But the creditors allege they have not yet been paid back anything to speak of. The Mohláji again asks for time; but the creditors are indignant and threaten to "proceed." Poor old Mohlá! He is so much married! And that, too, on a set purpose. They say he marries young ladies of fortune, so that he may be enabled to meet his heavy and long accumulating liabilities. But somehow or other the money seldom reaches the creditors. In the meantime, his Reverence keeps up his personal establishment in grand style, though he has just issued orders for shutting up a religious academy hitherto working under his auspices. This is false economy, to be sure; but what can you expect of a poor financier like the Mohlá, when the Imperial British Government practises, sometimes, a similar method of retrenchment? The Mohláji is looking up and about; and, with the help of a few friends from Bombay, may again tide over. But there is little chance of the creditors being paid in full. The Mohláji and his family are too civilised for any such folly. His Holiness, now about eighty, is reported to have married another "wife"—a buxom widow with thirty-five thousand rupees. I forget if this is the Mohlá's eleventh or twelfth wife. But

what matters it? So long as there is money, the cry will be, "still they come."

Only one more good Surti, my dear and honoured friend, Moonshi Lutfulláh Khan.* To my acquaintance with him and his I owe much of my affectionate regard for the Mahomedan character. Moonshi Lutfulláh is "a noticeable man, with large grey eyes." As scholar, linguist and author, Mr. Lutfulláh is well-known in these parts, and even in England.† To the latter country he accompanied the late Meer Jáffer Ali Khan of Surat. Over twelve years ago I used to be almost an inmate, now and then, of the Lutfulláh family, thanks to an intimacy with his son, Fazal. I have enjoyed some of the happiest hours of my life under his hospitable roof. Moonshi Lutfulláh was an old man when I knew him.

SIGHTS.

There is not much to be seen at Surat, except, of course, the new Hope Bridge, the Cowasji Jehangir Hospital, the *Killáh* (castle),

* Died in August 1883.

† See his Autobiography, a remarkable political memoir, edited by the eminent Persian scholar, Mr. E. B. Eastwick, C.B.

the European cemetery, the Park, perhaps the two cotton mills, the Band Stand, the High School, and the Andrews Library.

The Tapti Bridge, or as it is popularly named, the Hope Bridge, in honour of that energetic Collector, is a recent construction. It connects Surat with Ránder on the opposite bank. The bridge is a fine massive structure, and is no doubt a great convenience to the people. It cost over seven lakhs. There are many larger bridges in India ; but to the stick-at-home Surtis, their bridge is a marvel of human ingenuity. I am not surprised to be told that some of them worship it and offer milk and flowers to the deity on whose Atlantian shoulders the bridge is supported, the deity aforesaid being, presumably, Mr. Theodore Cracroft Hope, the whilom Collector.

The Hospital is an admirable building, due to the liberality of the late Sir Cowasji Jehangir Readymoney, the well-known Parsi benefactor of Bombay.

The *Killáh* is a glum bit of stone-work, which stands firm as a rock against the violence of the elements. It is a Mahomedan structure and is worth a visit.

To the building of the fine High School the late Mr. Sorabji Jamsetji Jejeebhoy contributed a large sum. Mr. Kharsetji Furdoonji Párah, too, has one or two charitable institutions at Surat standing to his credit—the Párah Dispensary and the Industrial School.

The Andrews Library is a very useful institution ; but it is badly off for want of funds, I am told. It is a pity that Bombay, knowing this to be so, will not save this institution from approaching difficulties.

The Bānd Stand is on a pretty open site, to which *gorá loke* (white people) drive by one entrance and *kálá loke* (black people) by another.

A SEASON OF PLENTY.

Poor Surat shared the fate of all the neighbouring districts during the recent famines. Then again the *water famine* was proving too much for her when Jupiter Pluvius luckily became propitious. His cloudy majesty is at present (latter part of 1881) exceedingly obliging. He comes and goes to order. The wise men of Surat wonder if the prospects of the *khedu**

* Cultivator.

could have been brighter even in the golden age. Everything is cheap, especially rice, *ghee*,* and *tarkári*.† The grain-dealers who, two months ago, entered into a secret compact to starve the poor, and who, only the other week, sat with all the insolence of shop, are now rather down in the mouth. They are to be observed paring their nails, scratching their heads, and so on, and receive even an ugly customer with elaborate attention. In a word, they enjoy a season of plenty down here ; and if my eyes have not deceived me, I saw a well-defined smile lurking in the countenance of one of the Municipal Commissioners. When you see that, you may be sure the creature is in the best of moods ; for in his normal frame of mind you can trace not a sign of emotion in the Commissioner's face, which is all cheek and chin. Indeed, the plenty is not so plentiful as in the day of the Nabob, when my great-uncle used to maintain a family of fourteen, in peace and comfort, on rupees seven a month. And even from this pittance, my good aunt, his wife, was able to buy him a boxful of snuff, a pocket-handkerchief, and a pair of goat-skin shoes every six months. In those days *ghee* sold at fifteen pounds a rupee. Those are called " the fifteen-

* Clarified Butter. † Vegetables.

pounds days." To-day, even though they look upon it as a very good year, *ghee* is less than four pounds the rupee. And *ghee* is everything to the Surti—his present happiness and his future bliss.

THE FLOODS AND FIRES OF SURAT.

Surat owes not a little of its decline to floods and fires. "The great fire of Surat," as it is described in official Reports, or "the great fiery havoc," as local boards have sung it, broke out at Machhlipit (central part of the town), on the evening of 24th April 1837, in the house of one of the richest Parsis. Though it was very still about the time, the fire kept spreading, till before mid-night it grew terribly in intensity and volume. Clouds of smoke, so the reports say, lit up by flashes of flame, were visible at a distance of 30 miles across the plain. At day-break, on the 25th, sprang up the south-west breeze carrying the flame over adjoining parts; and Kanpit, Jampha and other populous quarters were, in a few short hours, engulfed in ruin. Handsome dwelling houses and mosques of the Borahs were destroyed, and a number of women and children were burnt to death, finding escape from the zenana impossible. The fire raged at its height at 2 P.M. on the 25th.

Its strength abated at night; but it broke out again soon after and raged with redoubled fury till the morning of 26th. A number of dead bodies were found under the *debris*, many in wells and tanks. The exact number of those who perished could not be ascertained, nor would it be easy to estimate the loss in property which must have been incalculable. No less than 9,373 houses were burnt down, covering an extent of $9\frac{3}{4}$ miles! And all this in spite of prompt assistance by Government officials, by the famous Ardeshar Kotwal Bahádur, by men of the British Army and the Navy, and by brave-hearted Parsis, always to the front in times of calamity. This is, perhaps, the greatest of modern fires in Gujarát. But hundreds of others have occurred at Surat itself within my experience. A fire at Surat is a common occurrence. In fact, like epidemics, we have a periodic recurrence of fires, which the people call the Fire Season. During the season I have been told of from 3 to 7 fires in a week, and this is not at all to be wondered at. The streets and lanes are dark and narrow, the houses running into each other in an inextricable mass. Then the habits of the people are none of the safest, and the materials of which the houses are built are by no means fire-proof.

Again, at the first cry of fire the people are often panic-struck and demoralised. The local Municipality, under some energetic Collectors, has done much towards widening the streets. So fond was a certain well-known Collector of this widening process, that his clerks assured their friends that whenever a fire broke out in a thickly populated and ill-built quarter, the Sáheb rubbed his hands gleefully and smiled at the prospect of widening the street. On such an occasion, when the Collector went to the scene of destruction and attempted to soothe the whining Bania, who had lost his house or shop, that Bania would glance reproachfully at the Collector, as much as to say, why do you mock me with your sympathy after setting fire to my house? Indeed, it is believed in some circles that among the Collector's duties not the least important is that of setting fire to badly-built lanes and gullies in order to introduce long-deferred sanitary reforms! This must be mere superstition. At any rate, it is not for the chronicler to sift evidence in such a ticklish matter. Not being in the Collector's confidence, I must leave him to his conscience.

Surat has suffered more from floods than from fires. The Tapti rose highest, I believe,

in 1727, destroying property of the value of rupees two crores and a half, and doing great damage otherwise. The next flood of any importance occurred in 1776, the river rising 10 feet in a quarter of an hour and carrying off ships at anchor. 1782 witnessed another flood, by which 2,000 of the inhabitants lost their lives, besides immense injury to houses. The 2,000 people drowned had taken refuge on the Isle of Bet in order to escape the exactions of the Mahrattas. The flood of 1810 was as serious as the preceding ; that of 1822 not so serious, though the water rose 30 feet above the high tide level. This flood was accompanied by severe storms. The river rose twice in August 1837, as much as 37 feet the second time. A great part of the city walls fell down, 372 houses were washed away, 1,012 collapsed and 2,539 were more or less injured. Captain Harris, the Naval Officer of the day, reports :—“ After the flood was over, along the beach at Dumas pieces of timber, reeds, bushes, parts of houses, as well as bodies of animals, deer, cows, bullocks, buffaloes, and an immense number of snakes, were deposited in a line stretching for more than a mile and a half, and in many places piled up to a height of nearly five feet.” It was after the occurrence of this flood, I think,

that the Varachha Cut was constructed. Several other inundations have taken place since then, in 1872-73-76 and -82. But they were comparatively harmless, thanks to the protective works raised by Mr. Hope. The last great flood happened in 1883, the waters rising the highest yet recorded. The Government of Bombay was as anxious as could be wished to protect life and to relieve distress among the survivors. Officials on the spot worked zealously on the whole, though there appears to have been a good deal of bungling on the part of Municipal servants. The citizens of Bombay collected about a lakh of rupees for the victims of the flood, to which fund many other cities of Gujarát contributed handsomely. Help came even from Bengal, from the Honourable Mr. Hope, the Maharaja of Durbhanga, Mr. Manockji Rustomji and others. His Excellency the Governor of Bombay, the Honourable Mr. Peile and a few other officials also subscribed liberally. But I do not know if the Government of Bombay itself did anything in the matter. The official estimate of loss and damage appears to be too moderate.

It would be unfair to publish the popular estimate of loss in life and property consequent

on the flood. We need not take an alarmist view of the matter, but at the same time it would be wrong to shut one's eyes to presumptive evidence. The official estimate of the loss in life appears to have been based on the number of dead bodies discovered. The reporter seems to have lost sight of the old and the infirm, the blind, the lame and others—also beggars and low class villagers, the Dublas, Dheds and others, whose lives are of very little account. Now, if it is on this plan that the official Report has been drawn up, I have little to urge against the theory of 8 to 12 lives lost after the heaviest flood that has yet swept through the town and districts of Surat. If Government accept the explanation, that scarcely one life was lost on the collapse of 125 houses, it is no business of mine to disturb their equanimity. Subordinate officials are afraid of telling unpleasant truth to their superiors on such occasions. To show small expenditure and large receipts is the easiest way of securing promotion and titles.

Apart from loss of life, the mischief done to the village communities, especially the cultivators, must have been immense. They lost not only their cottages, but their fields with the

crops standing on them or the seed sown ; not only that, but their reserve food and seed grain, the cattle and implements. The utmost they could do was to betake themselves to trees, and there they could not carry the fields, the pots and pans, the bamboo *khatla* (bed) and the wardrobe of rags. Gold and silver they had none to carry, and I should not wonder if some had to leave women and children and other live encumbrances behind ; also if a number of villagers, who lived in the fields far from human habitation, were swept off at night.

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BROACH.

WE left Surat on the 16th March, my friend Rasul and I, and arrived at Broach after two hours' journey by the B. B. Railway. Close to the station we found the Rustomji Jamsetji Dharamsálá,* and here we put down ourselves and our baggage.

RUSTOMJI JAMSETJI JEJEEBHoy.

Poor Mr. Rustomji ! His princely progress through Gujarát is still remembered by the people, who bless his name for numerous quiet charities. In spontaneous and hearty goodwill towards man he was no way inferior to his sire.† Talk as one may of his "blindly lavish expenditure" and that sort of cold-blooded philosophy, one cannot divest oneself of the thought that Mr. Rustomji was cruelly jilted by fortune. What is a matter of more poignant regret to a generous heart is that his own people were far from grateful to him in his fallen fortunes. I fail to see the wisdom of the policy of the Parsi

* A resting place ; literally "a house of charity."

† Sir Jamsetji Jejeebhoy, first Baronet, the world-renowned philanthropist.

friends and others when they voted him a sectarian memorial. To my knowledge several Hindu and Mahomedan friends were ready and anxious, in fact they offered, to mark substantially their sense of admiration for this truly catholic lover of men. But his Parsi friends set themselves resolutely against all such proposals ; no one can tell for what reason. It were foolish to conceal what is not a secret, that poor Rustomji Jamsetji had a greater claim on the gratitude of all sections of society than his late lamented and handsomely endowed Baronet brother. But there is a proverb among us—“ All bow to the rising sun—none to the setting.” Rustomji Jamsetji most resembles the late Sir Cowasji Jehangir, with this difference, that the former had little of the cold, at times almost sordid, spirit of calculation which characterised the princely donations of the latter. All his charities were the offspring of generous impulse and an almost reckless disregard of consequences. Many “ philanthropic ” Parsis have died, and many may die hereafter (God have mercy on their souls !), but none probably has died so widely regretted and so long remembered as poor Rustomji.

The Rustomji Dharamsálá, though a really handsome, well-divided building, has not a

piece of furniture it can call its own—not one single chair or bedding.* Could not some Bombay Parsi buy the Dharamsálá, say, three hundred rupees' worth of small conveniences?

THE GREAT MAN OF LITTLE BROACH.

Seeing that the Dharamsálá was merely an enclosure of bare walls, with hard chunam flooring, I wrote to my friend, Desái Kaliánrái Hukumatrái, to help me with a few chairs. Desái Kaliánrái is the greatest among the Broach gentry, a Municipal Commissioner, a leading Shett, a public-spirited citizen, and a general favourite with his friends. The Desái is a man of taste, and keeps his house and grounds in excellent order. He came to my help with chairs, tables and beddings, and so kindly did we take to each other, that I refused to make the acquaintance of others at Broach. My first impressions of Broach are thus recorded:—

THE ADDRESS.

Broach, thou venerable relic of departed commercial activity, father of far-famed Gujarát, once the proud emporium of the trade of

* Written ten years ago.

Gujarát, Káthiáwár and Rajputáná, cradled by the holy Narbada and sanctified by the presence of the sacred Sukaltirth; I walk thy dusty, musty, spongy surface with a gentle, gingerly tread! Hail, land of pugilists and prudes, hail, hoary dust-town, miniature Cottonopolis, all hail to thee!

AN AFTERNOON PASTIME.

One cannot help loving this dear old town with all its drawbacks. While a man is there he almost feels as if he were treading his grand-papa's well-filled stomach after tiffin. This is a favourite pastime among natives: their afternoon meal is the most copious of all, after which, feeling a little uneasy on having swallowed about a pound of rice with the other concomitants, the elders of the family lie flat on the back, and invite the young hopefuls to pommel and promenade on their capacious "middle regions." Their version is, that they give that exhilarating exercise to their progeny out of love (the venerable hypocrites!), but everybody knows it is a sham. Well, then, one feels while walking the streets of Broach that he is hugging a welcome friend, as if he were clasped in the arms of old Father Christmas, with a cloak of dust on his shoulders.

CHARACTERISTICS.

Yes, the science of *henpeckery* is carried here to perfection. It is studied universally. The town itself is henpecked by that termagant of a river, the Narbadá ; the husbands are said to be generally henpecked by their better-halves. Even the lower creation seem to share the same fate ; the dog, the horse, the bull are tame as— a Turkish pacha ; the other sex is bold, pushing, forward. Nay, even high Government officials do not escape this terrible discipline ; their mistress, the Bombay Government, rules them with an iron rod.

A PRUDE.

I went a-marketing here, once upon a day, in the merry month of May ; I approached a dairy-shop, and seeing a pot of boiling milk, asked the woman sitting there how much she would take for a *ser** of her milk. She glared upon me in answer, got up from her crouching posture—I could see she was a short woman, with a shorter petticoat ; and a shorter temper still—she got up, and asked, in gasping tones, “ Is it asking for the milk you are after ? And asking *me* ! Ar’n’t you ashamed ? Ask my *this*.”

* About one pound, more or less.

Her *this*, I saw, was her old man, sitting in the inmost recesses of the shop. A Hindu woman will die rather than address or speak of her husband by his name; she will say "I say," or "my *this*." If they are an elderly pair, the wife will describe her husband as "father of my"—(naming her eldest born). The husband does the same by her; and it is delicious to hear these old creatures chatting cosily of an evening, "I say, mother of Rama." "Yes, father of Rama, what is it?"

But to return to the milk-maid. I humbly said, "I only ask if this milk is to sell." "Don't ask *me*," she shrieked; "milk or no milk. Asking a stranger woman! Ask my *this*, do you hear?" Her "*this*" was inside, and there he remained. I listened to her with patience, and then left her, merely remarking, "good woman, do remove the milk from under thy glance; it is turning sour." So saying I walked very fast towards my lodgings. I hope there are not many such women at Broach as my sweet-tempered milk-maid.

SIGHTS, NATURAL AND UNNATURAL.

The visitor will be struck here by the number, more so by the noise, of the ginning (cot-

ton-cleaning) factories. There is not much of other business to be noticed. Amongst sights, the best are the river Narbadá, the Kabir Bur, some old Dutch tombs, the band-stand, and recreation grounds. Perhaps the most noticeable sight in the streets is the snobbery of men and the prudery of women, also the happy-family relations between the cart-driver and his bullock. The animal is kissed, embraced, lashed, and imprecated by turn. "Go on, bullock of my heart, go on, thy mother-in-law's darling"; "Will you go or not? you lazy widower, you son of a widow." These are the sounds the ear very often catches, interspersed with whacking sounds, twisting of tails, cutting of flesh, &c. Broach badly wants a Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

But for its ginning factories, mostly under Parsi management—besides the large one of Messrs. Greaves and Co.—Broach would be an unspeakably dull place. Dulness is the prevailing characteristic of most Gujarát towns; at least, to one who has lived in Bombay it feels so.

Broach was recovering from the effect of the Gujarát famine at this time.* It was piteous

* 1879-80.

to see hundreds of villagers—men, women and children—begging from door to door, and swallowing anything that came handy. Some of these famished wanderers were, I was told, substantial farmers only a few years ago, but successive failures of crops and the inexorable demand of the *Sirkár** had driven them into voluntary exile. In the document I give below, a copy of which I am supposed to have picked up at Broach, and which document must be read between the lines, may be found the views of the Collector, the Revenue Commissioner, and the Government, as regards remission of taxes in bad seasons.

A REMARKABLE OFFICIAL DOCUMENT.

From the COLLECTOR, ———,

To the REVENUE COMMISSIONER, N.D.

SIR,

Looking at the widespread misery of the ryots, their distressing past and hopeless future, I respectfully submit that their arrears be remitted them, or at least the payment deferred till better times.

I have the honour to be,

ETC. ETC.

* Government.

From the REVENUE COMMISSIONER, N. D.

To the COLLECTOR, —.

Memo. 2,085 of February 1877.

The undersigned has received the Collector's extraordinary letter, and has done his duty by forwarding the same to head-quarters. Undersigned hopes the Collector will have a suitable reply from His Excellency the Governor.

From the CHIEF SECRETARY to GOVERNMENT,

To ——— Esq., COLLECTOR, —.

Demi-official.

SIR,

Your strange communication, forwarded by the Commissioner of your Division, deserves prompt notice. His Excellency in Council desires me to say that such unofficial proceeding on your part is highly reprehensible. But in consideration of your past meritorious services your fault is overlooked this time. Should you, however, repeat it, His Excellency will be forced to make an example of you. If officers are troubled with so much sentiment, they had better resign.

I am, sir, yours,

ETC.

RESOLUTION.—Whereas a certain District Revenue Official (name withheld out of consideration for long service) has thought fit to suggest the remission of our just and lawful dues, it is hereby notified for the general information of the Service that His Excellency will visit with his displeasure any such weakness, which may lead at any time, but for the vigilance of the Police, to crimes, such as riot, burglary, dacoity, and murder, and ultimately tarnish the fair fame of our Rule. Times change, and with them must we. Some of the population may die, that is one means of saving the rest. They may starve, languish, sell their children, or eat them. That is no concern of high-minded Christian rulers. *We must look to the remote future.* There we descry hoards of Afghans and Cossacks overrunning the fair fields of Cashmere. And would it be politic of us to rest before we have made a trans-Himalayan tramway, and till we take our formidable future foes home to Afghanistan and Siberia, wash the one and put the other to bed? Officers are requested to think over these complications before they talk of remission and this and that remedy.

This official memorandum, or, as they call it, Resolution, and the other brief but expressive epistles which accompany it, may not be found on Government records; but they will give to the uninitiated some idea of what we know as 'demi-semi-official arrangements, in which our newly developed Imperial policy finds occasional play. The imperial politician always looks to

the "remote future," affecting a lofty disregard for the present.

A ZEALOUS OFFICIAL.*

I was told the other day of an excellent young Postmaster in Gujarát. He is the very pink of a Postmaster in the way of standing on his dignity. His idea of asserting his authority is to fine the wretched postmen right and left. These men are paid about seven rupees (fourteen shillings) a month, out of which the *Mabap Sircar* makes it incumbent on each man to buy a red coat a year, a pair of shoes twice a year, turban, trousers, umbrella, &c. Part of what remains goes towards the Good Conduct Fund. From the residue the peon has to maintain wife and family, father, mother, children, cousins, aunts, in that irreproachable respectability which befits a servant of the Paternal British Government. 'Hard lines,' you will say, reader. But I have not done. A peon tells me he is now fined about two rupees a month on an average. So what he earns is five rupees, out of which he has to attend to each one of the duties, private and public, that I have just enumerated. The Postmaster is very likely a

* Written eight years ago.

good man ; but he overworks his men, and for the slightest error, such as one commits a thousand a day, he cuts the poor wretches in the tenderest, and, alas, the slenderest part ! Sir Richard Temple could have made an excellent license-tax collector of my friend the Postmaster. He is a typical instance of what we call here ‘ a zealous official ’—the man who, be he Native or European, brings the Government into disrepute by resorting to petty high-handedness like this, very often in order to curry favour with arbitrary and unscrupulous superiors. Such men are, unhappily, not few, nor confined to a limited area. They are scattered over the whole Empire, and do damage to the *prestige* of the Government wherever they are.

•

BARODA.

' LEAVING Broach, nothing loth to leave, we came to Baroda on 10th March 1878. The capital of the Guicowárs was to me the Mecca of my pilgrimage.

THE APOSTROPHE.

Land of my birth ! After twenty-four years of forced exile, I fly to thee. For a fourth of a century has my spirit yearned to see thee. For a full fortnight have I tried, on the spot, to conjure up thy past glories. But where are they, Baroda ? Where are thy traditions, thy institutions ? Where are the goody-goody stories which soothed me to slumber and thrilled me into infantile action ? Above all, where are thy great institutions, such as the Sáthmári* in which human beings were trampled under the elephant's foot, where alleged offenders were buried alive, thrown down steep hills, pinned to the wall, rolled in barrels nailed inside ? Where are thy *Holi* festivals, during which a hundred hired nymphs frolicked in naked charms in the palace compound, and invited,

* Known to Europeans as elephant fight.

by a thousand arts, the whizzing liquid of the royal *pichkári*?* Where are the marriages between doves† and the attendant festivals? Where are the crusades against cats, because one of the feline tribe breakfasted on the feathered bridegroom? Where is thy bracing fever, thy benignant cholera, O land of my birth? Gone, gone are all thy glories, gone for evermore! And instead I see the jail and the court house, parks and palaces, roads and tanks, schools and colleges; and that monster of a Municipal Commissioner. But enough of interrogatory apostrophes; they lead to bad blood and bad grammar.

DESCRIPTION OF A DURBAR.‡

A Durbár was held last year (1877) in honour of the youthful Guicowár having attained his year. The Dewán Sáheb was absent in the dirtrict; his duties therefore devolved on his Parsi coadjutor. Half an hour before the Guicowár arrived, the nawábs, sirdárs, and darkdars, and a host of other feudatories flocked

* Syringe. Mulhár Ráo Guicowár used to play at this very delectable game.

† Khanderáo Guicowár celebrated the marriage of his two favourite doves with royal pomp.

‡ A court or political reception; a sort of leveé.

to the Nazar Bágh. The court officials received them. On entering the state-room, each looked about to see if he had the right seat reserved for him. Your Spanish gentry could not be more punctilious in their reserved-seat etiquette. It was a sight to see old Nawáb Squaretoes Sakkar-Missari exchanging fiery glances with young Sirdár Hukká-Chilam Pán-Supári. I looked on steadily till my lips curled up and my nose expressed contempt at their silent squabbles. They simultaneously read my thoughts, and turned upon me with a fierce look which seemed to say, "You intruding up-start! What have you to do with *our* concern?" That day I made up my mind, that if I ever went to a Durbár again, I should look as grave as a chancery judge, whatever more exalted people did. Soon after came the Guicowár, as intelligent and fine-looking a young fellow as was ever called upon to grace a *gadi*; * as cool and collected as if to this "greatest favourite of fortune of our times"—as Sir Mádav Row aptly describes him—his present life and his life of five years ago made very little difference. His Highness was shortly after followed by the British Agent and his staff. When the appointment of Mr. Philip Sandys Melvill to Baroda

* The royal cushion.

was first announced, it was considered by the Bombay officials especially as rather out-of-the-way. But the Government have been amply justified in their choice. I know few officers in the whole range of the Indian Civil Service who could discharge the duty of the post with greater tact and delicacy. Mr. Melvill's principle seems to have been never to interfere hastily with the Durbár concerns, and a healthy principle it is. In private he was as polite as he was amiable in politics. But his politeness oppressed me.

Mr. Melvill had very little of the petty inter-meddling spirit which, unfortunately, characterises a majority of Military and even Civil Politicals; and being above local prejudices, he discharged his duties of arbiter between the State and its vassals with a calm impartiality which seldom left room for appeal. Though ready and anxious to help forward the good work inaugurated by Sir Máday Row, he seldom yielded where principles required firmness.

But to return to the Durbár. Well, the Resident sat, and with him the whole assembly. And then rose three noticeable personages from the floor on which they had been squatting.

Two muddy-complexioned *Naikins*,* and the bear-leader, that is to say, the music-master. The former ethereal beings I dare not describe ; the latter was a short, stout Musulman, not much under four-hundred pounds avoirdupois. I need not say he is a man of great weight. The dusky songstresses sang a few snatches in a clear, vigorous monotone, accompanied by instrumental music on half-a-dozen *porcelain cups and saucers* by the stout Musulman afore-said. The music was scarcely intended for man ; so I cannot judge of it. It soon ended, to our relief, and was followed by the rubbing of *attar*† (which has a sweet sickly odour, and a most tenacious regard for your handkerchief) and distribution of *pán* and *supári*.‡ Before the Durbár broke up, a tall, lank courtier stepped forward, and offered his stereotyped good-wishes to His Highness, the beginning and, in fact, the gist of which I translate *verbatim et literatim* for the reader :—“ May you bathe in milk, and may you be blessed with sons.” Thus ended the Durbár of 1877.

THE PEOPLE AND THE DOGS.

From prince to people is a natural transition. The capital of the Guicowárs has a population

* Dancing girls.

† Otto of roses.

‡ Betel-leaf and the nut.

of two lakhs, consisting of men, women, and children, with a fair sprinkling of páhriá dogs. The men may be divided into two classes—the snobbish and the sheepish. The former perpetually chew *pán supári*, wear huge turbans, and drive about in tiny carriages, dragged along by wee little bullocks, an inch or so smaller in size than goats. The more bloated the face, and the smaller the carriage and bullock, the readier is room made for the owner by the awe-struck pedestrian. Women may be divided into three classes—wives, widows, and prudes; the first rule their husbands, the second rule their shops, the third may have been intended to scare away the small boys and dogs, and generally go about veiled and without shoes. The last are very helpful to the Police, in a way, but honest citizens avoid them somehow. The little boys of Baroda may be described as “sad dogs,” and the dogs as “gentlemen at large.” These gentlemen seem to enjoy more privileges than their biped brethren. You will see one of them of an evening basking and luxuriating in the sunshine and streetdust, his red tongue lolling out, absolutely refusing to make room for the state carriage, or any other carriage, until he is taken hold of by his southern extremity* and

* The tail.

flung bodily into the neighbouring basket of sugar cakes. Even under such trying circumstances his serenity is generally undisturbed.

H. H. THE LATE MAHÁRÁJÁ KHANDERÁO.

It is said the late lamented Mahárájá Khanderáo Guicowár was very partial to canine philosophers. His Highness was a genuine ruler of men, brave as Rustom, and munificent as Jamshid, though perhaps not so wise as Solomon. He had strong likes and dislikes. But his failings were always amiable. One of these was, that he thought himself a born Esculapius. He had a remedy for all diseases, known and unknown, and used to physic every one about him. He used to experiment on a large scale. The shortest way to his favour was to go and say you had the belly-ache—by far the most common complaint among the Barodaïtes. Well, His Highness would straightway repair to his dispensary, and return with a large bowl containing some vile mixture, which you must quaff at a draught, without giving the slightest indication of a wry face. On the contrary, unhappy patient, you must smile while drinking the royal nostrum. If you do not grin in the most approved court fashion,

you are a ruined man. Well, after you have swallowed the poisonous stuff, make a low bow to the royal physician, and retire to the adjoining room. Going to eject the dose quietly? Do not attempt it, deluded wretch, there are two royal eyes gloating over thy misery. Go to sleep over the potion, though thy inner man may be on the fire of hell the while. Return in half an hour to report progress; smile and simper and bow, and loudly bepraise the medicating genius of thy master. Then go thy way, thy fortune is made.

DISPOSAL OF DOGS.

But to come to the gentlemen dogs again. I fear they make it too hot for His Highness's other loyal subjects, and must either be banished, or the Municipal Commissioner may give them a uniform and set them to some "Imperial" work. The Afghan war has not yet quite ended, and the Zulu war may begin anew. The illustrious Ráma had Hanuman's monkey-army to fight his battles with Ráwana; why may not Baroda send to one of the frontiers a contingent of its canine cavalry?

SUMMING-UP.

To sum up, Baroda is a good place enough, but it is dull, dull beyond description. There

is no living here ; it is a mere humdrum existence. Between the people and the upper ten thousand there is no sympathy. You have no such institution as Society.

EXHORTATION.

How is it there is no missionary here ? Import one, ye powers that be ; he is indispensable to progress and enlightenment. Get up popular lectures and street-preaching. "Steady internal progress" on paper, and all that, is very well, but let the people learn to *enjoy life* under your administration. In their present state they are almost justified in looking back. Let them forget the past. The past reign of rapine and plunder and degrading superstition they must be taught to hold in horror. Give them something on the strength of which they may fondly look forward. Let the agricultural interests of your people claim your chief consideration. Get up cattle shows, and agricultural shows, and vegetable shows. Get up, if not fine, at least industrial arts exhibitions.

THE VISCOUNT, THE SÁTHMÁRI, AND THE POPINJAY.

Attend all ye who, &c., to a soul-stirring account of the Baroda Sáthmári, which implies

an elephant fight, but really means much more than that. In the year of grace 1879, 12th day of April, it pleased my Lord of Hinchinbrook, a Government guest, to ask to be shown the elephant fight. To hear a live lord is to obey; and instantly were issued despatches from the acting Dewán's department to "all concerned," namely, one parrot, two elephants, eight buffaloes, two rhinoceroses, twelve rams, and sixteen wrestlers, a superior race of animals, who looked almost men, short and sleek and close-shaven. These doughty champions met at about five on the eventful evening, at a sort of house in the heart of the town, variously described to me as a palace, a bakery, and a charnel-house. I believe it was a palace in ancient times, when "horses were kings." At present, it is a skeleton house, very sensitive, but with an air that reminds one of better days. Adjoining this house of mystery is a spacious compound, the battle scene, that is to say, and surrounding it are the menagerie and stables. The *tamáshá** opened with an acrobatic exhibition. A man stood on a rickety frame-work of wood, resting on a table, another man taking somersaults on the arms and shoulders of number one. I do not very well remember

* Public show.

this part of the performance, but have a vivid recollection of the concluding part, when the wooden frame-work came to grief, and with it the two performers. It was a relief to know that both escaped serious injury.

Then came the accomplished parrot, who flourished his miniature sword, with his beak, of course, bent his bow and shot his arrows, and, what is more amazing still, loaded his tiny cannon with gunpowder, lit the touch and—fired ! The feathery hero wrought wonders. The skill of a British general is nothing to the versatile genius of this gymnast, archer and artillery soldier. Indeed, that parrot is a genius ! May this simple record immortalise thee, O Prince of Popinjays !

The rhinoceroses gave each other very warm reception. About this time last year, when Sir Richard Temple graced the *Sáthmári*, these sulky warriors would not *close*, though every gentle persuasion—such as poking into their eyes, nose, and other tender parts the longpointed lance—was exhausted. Lord Hinchinbrook was more fortunate. Old Rhinos fought for him, and fought valiantly and well. The elephants, too, went in for it right cheerfully, and it was a sight to see these black moving

hills of flesh tugging and lugging and heaving away as earnestly as if, on the issue of *their* contest, depended the scientific rectification of our frontier. Poor beasts ! And yet why *poor* beasts ? Are they not considered the paragons of beauty by the Hindus ? “ Oh, elephant of my heart,” was the tender exclamation with which our ancient fathers used to greet their beloved when in a frolic mood. Ask Sir Máday Row, who is an authority on Hindu literature, from politics to poetry. And yet your modern Mary Ann would not relish the compliment if her Brown met her behind the kitchen door with, “ Ho helephant of my 'art !”

The buffaloes and rams butted away beautifully. Brisk and energetic was the meeting of the bovine heroes, and their parting, oh ! so very slow and unwilling.

But before finishing this catalogue of intelligent fighting brutes, the faithful historian must not omit the wrestlers—bless my eyes, how very like *men* they look at times ! They first make each other a make-believe bow, then shake each other by the paws, and then close. They rub and scrub and curry-comb each other till both drop on earth, where they go through a process of mutual kneading, and finally they mix, these

fat, living butter-barrels, and there you lose their identity ; you cannot say which is which. And here ends my description of the *Sáthmári*.

But let me just run you off one screed. I was asked last year by a great man, a man of advanced views, what I thought of the fight. I praised the affair without compromising my conscience, and then gently insinuated, "But don't you think, Sir ——, it is a somewhat barbarous pastime ?" That insinuation cost me a fine lecture, in the course of which I was told of the great power such exhibitions have to excite our martial instincts. I blushed at my want of enthusiasm.

OFFICIAL DIGNITARIES.

In the course of the two visits to Baroda, I was able to make the acquaintance, more or less, of all the official dignitaries. Sir Mádav Row I saw during the first visit, with two or three members of his council. It is impossible, of course, not to be favourably struck with such a man. My visit lasted less than half an hour. At Baroda also I had the acquaintance of the Resident, Mr. Melvill, and of Major and Mrs. Nutt. As I have gone through the Baroda Administration Report for 1877-78, I think

it may be well to give, in a few lines, my impressions about these gentlemen individually, in connection with their official work. To begin at the beginning.

H. H. MAHÁRÁNI JAMNÁBÁI, C.I.E.

The widow of the Maharájá Khanderáo seems to be generally popular. Bráhmíns worship her more fervently than they worship Brahmá. According to official reports, she is a highly intelligent woman, and very charitable. She is, of course, at the head of the palace, and the palace expenditure, having been left to Her Highness's control, has happily increased by about a lakh.* Last year's item (1876) stands at sixteen lakhs odd (£160,000). There are several departments of the palace—the household, kárkhánás, and dharmadagá being the principal. Each of these costs considerably over six, four, and four lakhs, respectively. With every respect for Her Highness's pious instincts, I submit the dharmádagá items are too heavy. The kárkhánás include the jewel establishment, the elephants, horses, bullocks, fireworks, sporting establishments, dancing girls, and the athletes, that is, the animals employed in the arena. The dharmádagá is

* A hundred thousand rupees.

maintained for giving *khichri** to the poor and gifts to the Bráhmíns. Looking to the item under this head, I do not wonder at the report that some of the *mendicant* Bráhmíns of the royal household are *millionaires*. But next year we are promised wholesale economy. We all remember how Her Highness was invested with the Imperial Order of the Crown of India. That evening Mr. Melvill proposed Her Highness's health at a royal banquet. In returning thanks the gallant Dewán indulged in a burst of eloquence, likening Her Highness to Venus. But it may be remembered, it was to the Venus of Astronomy, not of poetry, that the veteran poet-politician likened his royal mistress. The Maháráni is in some respects a remarkable woman—she is firm of hand and strong of will. She is said to be a capital horsewoman, and fond of riding out into the open districts, and all that sort of things. She is believed to be equally fond of music and dancing ; and she is the mother of little Tarábái, married recently to the Sávuntwári Chief.

H. H. SIÁJIRÁO.

His Highness the young Maharájá is the object of Ráni Jamnábái's instant and constant

* Rice and *dál* cooked together.

solicitude. The Agent, the Dewán, and the tutor are agreed in thinking him an exemplary youth of his class. His arithmetic is said to be weak ; but it must be remembered that few of his ancestors had a genius that way. If he had an arithmetical turn of mind, why should he have been reserved for a *Rája*? His progress in languages is, however, said to be satisfactory. He is now* reading the *Children's Friend*, a book without an equal. Why should he not read a little of Chesterfield now and then ? His Highness is also studying Chemistry, Political Economy, and Geography. All this while his physical development is being taken care of. In the midst of this good-natured progress-report, I am gratified to find Mr. Melvill's sober testimony as to the young Guicowár being hitherto "untainted in his moral character." It looked almost impossible that a youth, with Siájiráo's private surroundings and his unfortunate physical precocity, should long remain untainted ; but the official testimony may be accepted.

The Mahárájá was installed on the *gádi* of Baroda by His Excellency the Governor of Bombay with unusual pomp and ceremony.

* In 1877-78.

This was in December 1881. Sir James Fergusson delivered an admirable address at the time. During the long interval between 1878 and 1883 His Highness is reported to have improved in a remarkable manner. His character may be said to have been formed. He is now *paterfamilias*, and has household cares added to the cares of State. I do not envy Mahárájá Siájráo, though I should like to have a fraction of his pocket money, now and then, for a hundred deserving objects. But His Highness seems to be a careful donor. He impresses visitors very favourably by his manners. The Viceroy was much struck with his intelligence during a recent visit. I had the honour of an interview with His Highness in May 1882. He received me very courteously, and appeared to be anxious to learn something new about every topic we traversed. It is clear that he means to rule. But in the case of a sanguine young man there is always the danger of what Indian bards denounce as *abhimána*—pride or power-pride. I pray that this danger may be averted, and that he may live to reign for the good of his subjects over whom he has been providentially raised.

His Highness is desirous of reforms in many directions, though where an outlay of funds is

concerned, his advisers hold back. Among other improvements may be noticed the opening of a cotton spinning mill by the Mahárájá, which is expected to pay him well, besides finding employment for the poor. His Highness has also a scheme of water supply under consideration. Perhaps the best reform the Guicowar has yet attempted is that of pensioning off and otherwise dismissing a number of hereditary hangers-on, and setting them to earn an honest livelihood. Baroda boasts of a privileged class—sirdárs, darakdárs and others. These worthies have hitherto had a very good time of it. They ran into debt with a light heart, indulging in every kind of extravagance; and when hard pressed, demanded relief from the State treasury. On the other hand, they considered themselves above paying their plebeian creditors who could not sue them! All this nonsense, I am told, is being put a stop to.

THE RÁJÁ DEWÁN.

This veteran administrator is an *élève* of the Madras University, a Maráthá Bráhmin by race, and a Tanjorian by birth. He owes something of his early education, I believe, to Christian missionaries. These facts may prove

instructive to the cockneys whose feeble wit is never tired of railing at "the benighted presidency," and at the efforts of foreign *padres*. I know little of young Mádav Row's academic career ; but it must have been far above the common run, to judge from the fact that soon after leaving college he was taken in hand by the Director of Public Instruction, Mr. Evan Powell. He seems to have started in life as a schoolmaster, and sometime after is found in Government employ. At this stage he attracted the notice of one of the Arbuthnots, at whose recommendation, probably, Mr. Mádav Row came to be tutor to the first Prince of Travancore, and ultimately the Dewán. This prince, now Mahárájá,* is considered a highly educated and accomplished man, and an enlightened ruler. This is, no doubt, partly due to the influence of His Highness's tutor. It was for his successful administration of Travancore, I believe, that Sir Mádav Row was knighted by the Paramount Power. He was then invited by the Mahárájá Holkar to take charge of his State as Dewán. Here he remained for some years, and managed to secure the esteem and good will of, if not the Mahárájá, at any rate, the British Government and the people.

* Died in 1886.

SIR MÁDAV ROW AT BARODA.

Early in 1875, on the deportation of Mulhár Ráo Guicowár, Government cast about for a pilot capable of steering Baroda, a most unseaworthy vessel, clear of the dangers and difficulties surrounding it. Their choice fell on Sir Mádav Row, and so far it has been fairly justified. Indeed, it would not be transgressing truth if I said, on good authority, that in the past three years this able Maráthá minister has worked wonders. He has almost cut through formidable rocks of Girásia* and Sirdár† claims, crossed the shoals of internal and external opposition, refilled the sands of the almost run-out revenue glass, bridged over boundary chasms,‡ and spread the light of education where once “reigned and revelled” the gloom of ignorance. The judicial, financial, and sanitary chaos he has reduced to order, which, Edmund Burke tells you, is “the foundation of all good things.” Instead of the army of athletes, who expended their brute force in wrangling with brute creatures, Sir Mádav Row introduced an army of intellectual wrestlers who fight their foes in their several provinces with faithful courage.

* A vassal, generally a small landed proprietor.

† A military vassal.

‡ Boundary disputes between neighbouring States.

Mulhár Ráo's Baroda was the most uncleanable of Augean stables ; but with their brooms and mops and spades (this is a homely Sanskrit figure) the enlightened lieutenants of the Dewán have swept away abuses, and made it all sweet and clean for young Siaji Ráo and his little family of eighteen lacs.*

ADMINISTRATION DETAILS.

But to come to the particulars of the year under review—1878. On the outset, I am favourably impressed by the Dewán's endeavours to "conserve the rights and privileges" of his State. These endeavours have culminated in the reduction, to its minimum point, of the active interference of too many British officers (neighbouring, I believe) in the internal administration of the State. This is a great triumph for Baroda, and equally creditable to the persistent representations of the Durbár and the liberal good sense of the Paramount Power. In the year under review, the Dewán obtained the loan, from the Bombay Government, of the able Civilian, Mr. Joshua King, for the settlement of *girás* disputes. The Minister also confesses to having invested to some extent in

* 18,00,000, population of Baroda.

municipal dead stock, an arrangement sure to benefit the live stock of Baroda in the end. In the same year were sanctioned or expended Rs. 2,30,000 for medical buildings, of which the New Jamnábái Dispensary cost Rs. 86,000 and is pronounced by Dr. Cody* as "unsurpassed at least in this country," in its management for the "comfort, convenience, and privacy of the patients." Dr. Cody may be right in his estimate of this gem of a dispensary. But I, too, have seen dispensaries in Káthiawár, which are, and will remain for a century to come, quite "unsurpassed."

AN UNSURPASSABLE DISPENSARY.

For instance, there was one at Máliá. It was in a nice little hovel, and was conducted on catholic principles; for, not only was it open to light and rain, but even beasts of the field and birds of the air found free access to it. For some time, I was told, the dispensary had not been working; but I found that this assertion could not be borne out; for I myself saw a number of respectable-looking mice experimenting with the surgical instruments, and a number of stalking spiders surrounding the blue bottles with a fantastic network.

* Died at Bombay in 1883, deeply regretted.

FINANCE.

In spite of liberal disbursements under all heads, it is gratifying to see that the Dewán so well kept up his financial position. Soon after the assumption of office, he roughly estimated the normal revenue of Baroda at about 110 lacs, and the normal expenditure at 105 lacs. The receipts for this year (1878), I note, amount to 120 lacs, which is more by 10 lacs than what the Dewán first estimated. The disbursements for this year are 122 lacs, which is more by 17 lacs than the original rough estimate. Both the receipts and the disbursements were, however, mainly influenced by the bad year on one hand, and the consequent extraordinary expenditure on the other. The amount invested in Government notes stands at one crore and two lacs* at the end of the year under review. Altogether the financial position is most satisfactory. The report gives promise of curtailment in several departments, especially the palace and the military. This is a healthy move. But the double marriage† at Baroda has absorbed a large fraction of Sir Mádv Row's cherished hoards once basking in the sunshine of $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. interest.

* £1,020,000, reckoning Rs. 10=£1.

† Of the Mahárájá and his cousin Tarabai.

THE RÁJÁ DEWÁN AS A WHOLE—THE BRIGHT SIDE.

The Rájá Sir T. Máday Row is an avowed admirer of Anglo-Indian statesmanship, and his administration thus far of one of the largest native States in India has been thoroughly British in character. Whether this administration—a most interesting experiment in itself—has been or is likely to be a complete success, time alone can tell. Sir Máday Row went to Baroda with a reputation for rare political ability, and he has given ample proof also of his industry and perseverance. Sir Dinkar Row and Sir Máday Row were the likeliest men for the coveted prize. Baroda was then bordering on anarchy, thanks to Mulhár Rao's gross mismanagement, and his perverse disregard of the advice of a Dewán like Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji who strove hard to save him from himself. After Mr. Dadabhai's resignation finances were found to be at a low ebb ; the administration of law and justice was arbitrary and uncertain ; and, to be brief, both State and Society were more or less demoralised. It required a strong hand to restore the *prestige* of justice and law, and to check the sirdárs, zemindárs, and other hereditary hangers-on in their career of oppres-

sion on one hand, and extravagance on the other. The public, the Maráthá people especially, had made up their minds as to the appointment of Sir Dinkar Row. The Government of India, however, nominated Sir Mádav Row, who was generally understood to be the more liberal-minded administrator of the two. But somehow this appointment did not please the public of Western India. The attitude of both Maráthás and Gujarátis was rather ominous, and it no doubt damped the spirit of the ardent administrator whose career had hitherto been a series of triumphs. To add to the discomforts of his position, the Government of Bombay "looked with a severe eye" upon the intruder from the South, whom Holkar had only recently found to be too advanced for his slow-going subjects. But the fiat had gone forth, and Sir Mádav alone could rescue Baroda from anarchy. He had only a short time previously afforded Lord Northbrook great pleasure by his astronomical studies. He was generally allowed to be a man of talent, one of the best educated men in India, with a will and capacity for work. Thus came His Excellency to Baroda, conquering and to conquer. Luckily for him, the Government sent a local Agent and Resident who was well qualified by temperament and

training to second His Excellency in every detail of administration. The Dewán of Baroda had, indeed, good cause to be thankful for the appointment of Mr. P. S. Melvill.

Sir Mádav Row, on setting to work, formed a ministry of some of the ablest native servants of the Government of Bombay. He skilfully distributed the work of administration, reserving to himself supreme control of affairs in every department. He requested his subordinates to find him as much money as they could by honest means. The result was, that within a year the Dewán was able to show a surplus. Arrears of State dues were recovered; fresh contracts were made on advantageous terms; sirdárs and other idle pensioners were told to shift for themselves; the Maháráni and the Guicowár elect were informed that they must not exceed their liberal allowances, and that the State would not be responsible for extravagance. Having procured funds, the Dewán entered upon a series of reforms, revenue, judicial, municipal, and educational. A glance at his elaborate annual reports will show that Sir Mádav Row has done more than was anticipated. He has changed the face of Baroda. He has introduced various reforms, developed industries,

and encouraged individual enterprise. Two years ago, in letting off a couple of marriages, he exhibited the resources of the country and gave to European visitors a taste of Oriental hospitality such as is seldom offered even at the durbárs of Rájás.

THE SHADOWY SIDE.

But in spite of all this prosperity, Sir Mádav Row's administration of Baroda is far from popular either with the Maráthás or the Gujarátis. Sir Mádav Row is not only an admirer of Anglo-Indian statesmanship; he is an imitator of the same. He worships routine and centralization. The result has been disastrous so far, as it could hardly be otherwise in a State where the masses are yet struggling with poverty and ignorance. What can be more exasperating to the poor illiterate *khedu*,* used to direct appeal and rapid decision, than to have to carry his grievance from his village to the town, and thence to the district, and finally to the capital? Another fault in the Dewán is said to be that he insists on exercising direct control over the minutest departmental detail, even to the employment or

* Cultivator.

dismissal of a sepoy. His municipal and other reforms are confined to the principal towns. The Mofussil* is a howling wilderness. Roads, irrigation, and all other essentials of material progress are conspicuous by their absence. The people, almost all Gujarátis of the "mild Hindu" type, are committed to the mercy of Maráthá officials—men not only unacquainted with the concerns of rural life in Gujarát, but destitute of sympathy with the masses. The sure and short road to popularity at headquarters is increase of revenue. To the unscrupulous official nothing is impossible in this direction. The Bombay papers have reported many instances of oppressive taxation introduced on frivolous pretexts, and various taxes of the kind are still levied, although the nominal reasons for them no longer exist. Sir Mádav Row has sense enough to see that, with the people arrayed against his administration, he has no chance of ultimate and permanent success. Intelligent and beneficent as that administration has been, as compared with the state of things which preceded it, there are yet lacking in it, as in its "Imperial" model, many of the qualities essential to lasting success.

* Country districts.

Popular disaffection is already finding vent in newspaper articles and in anonymous pamphlets, in which the writers accuse Sir Mádav Row and his co-adjutors of crimes equally repulsive and hateful. These may be all—no doubt many of them are—a tissue of malicious fabrications, but they augur no good to the now very much-embarrassed ministry.*

Sir Mádav Row resigned office in 1882. Having done so much for Baroda in the way of inaugurating useful reforms, the Dewán no doubt wished to stay long enough to carry some of them to completion. But his position was made uncomfortable with a shrewd and self-willed prince and with the Durbár and the zenana arrayed against a foreign administration. I believe Sir Mádav yielded to his master so far as he consistently could. But when he saw that from the position of the ruler or regent he was about to be reduced to that of a mere agent of a superior will, he discreetly withdrew. I am honestly of opinion that the ministry ought to have continued at Baroda a few years longer. But that was not to be. The Rájá has not betaken himself to serene retirement wherein, I trust, he will devote his opportunities to the

* Written in 1880.

good of his countrymen who are justly proud of the talented Tanjorian.

KHÁN BAHÁDUR KÁZI SHÁHBUDDIN.

This able revenue officer is a Mahomedan, and was at one time in British employ as Mám-latdár. I can trace him only so far back ; his official identity beyond that is to me shrouded in mystery. That he was once a school-boy and so on, may be admitted ; but his personal history must be reserved till he retires, or at least becomes a member of the Legislative Council.* From a mamlatdár, Kázi Sháhbuddin came to be a Deputy Collector. He then entered the service of His Highness the late Rao of Kutch. Since then, I believe, he has been at Baroda. He can, therefore, be fairly supposed to have a greater knowledge of the ins and outs of Baroda than any of his brother officers. Kázi Sháhbuddin has a remarkably clear head, and his revenue administration of Baroda would do credit to any English Civilian in India. In the dismal history of Mahomedan management of public affairs in this part of India, Kázi Sháhbuddin's official career is a shining light. The flourishing state of Baroda revenues, and the

* He has retired, and is now a member of the Bombay Legislative Council.

comparative ease with which they are collected, speak much for him. "With a rare mastery of details, he knows and appreciates large principles, and applies them with judicious modifications to the existing state of things." So says Sir Mádav Row, and he ought to know what he says. Kázi Sháhbuddin is well known for his pleasant manners and accommodating habits, and during the recent scarcity in Gujarrát he discovered a vein of philanthropy as charming as it was original. He kept under his protection a number of famine refugees, and was extremely kind to them.

KHÁN BAHÁDUR PESTONJI JEHÁNGIR.

This Parsi official commenced his career, years ago, under the auspices of the British Government; and since his entrance into public service up to this day he has been recognised as, perhaps, the ablest native officer in the department under which he has served. He is best known in this Presidency as Settlement Officer; and as such he seems to have commanded the approval and confidence of Government. He went to Baroda, six years ago, with a reputation for ability and independence. His duties at Baroda were of a delicate and

complex nature, involving the awards of very considerable sums of money ; but he discharged them with a judicious care that often entitled his decisions to the acceptance of both parties. Mr. Pestonji has rejoined Government service.

KHÁN BAHÁDUR CURSETJI RUSTOMJI.

This gentleman, also a Parsi, is a *protégé* of the British, under whom he has occupied several judicial posts. He has a very respectable knowledge of English law, and is a fine Maráthá scholar. He is a slow, shrewd, and competent officer, and at present occupies the important office of Chief Justice of Baroda. He presides over the Varishtá Court, and transacts business in relation to original and appeal suits with much discrimination. Mr. Cursetji Rustomji is assisted as Puisne Judge by

RAO BAHÁDUR JANÁRDAN SAKHÁRÁM GADGIL,

well known for his power of manipulating figures, in which business he once rendered himself useful to the Dewán. Mr. Gadgil was some years ago connected with Bombay journalism. Under the Varishtá Court there are, in all, 123 inferior tribunals, with 126 judges, which, to be mathematical, gives the exact ratio of 1·024390

judges to 1 court. Among these finely decimalised administrators of Guicowári law may be mentioned the well-known Mr. Ambálál Sákerlál, Mr. Raoji Vittal, and Mr. Gunesh Shitáram Shástri. The cost of the whole judicial organisation for the year (1878) is put down at Rs. 3,73,000, against which there is a set-off of Rs. 2,81,000, in the shape of stamps, fees, fines, &c.

RÁO BAHÁBUR VINÁYEKRAO J. KIRTANE.

This officer I have been industriously looking about for, till I find him sadly mixed up with the Police. Mr. Kirtane is a quadruple officer, managing the *Khángi*,* the General, the Educational, and Police Departments. He seems to be a most efficient and able officer, and has rendered very good service to the Dewán in the matter of police organisation and reform during this year. Sir Mádav speaks with cordial approval of "the rare amount of knowledge, thoughtfulness, and sustained though unostentatious energy" which this officer has expended on the discharge of his multifarious duties. Mr. Kirtane was appointed Acting Dewán in 1885 and retired in 1887. He is now Dewán

* Guicowar's private purse.

to His Highness the Holkar. The strength of the city police force is represented by 1 superintendent, 8 inspectors, 72 subordinate officers, 245 peons, 20 sowars,* 4 detectives, and 42 men on office establishment. Besides the usual police expenditure of Rs. 95,508, an extraordinary grant of Rs. 18,923 was made this year: Mr. Superintendent Tubak, well known in Bombay, has been thanked by the Dewán for having guarded grain-shops during the recent scarcity.

MR. G. F. H. HILL, C.E.

This gentleman is State Engineer at Baroda, and the Department under him has done "very creditable work," to judge from former reports. The total outlay by Mr. Hill's Department during the year is Rs. 6,37,000. His office establishment has been materially strengthened, and special addition has been made for purposes of account and audit, which will cost annually Rs. 18,000. An additional sum of Rs. 25,000 was also sanctioned for fair weather roads in the Amreli Division. This latter amount, the Dewán Sahib says, was partly spent "usefully," and partly, I should say, "wasterfully." Sir Madhav Row forgets that nothing under the sun

is perfect. However, His Excellency is not behindhand in Oriental compliment. He says:—"Mr. Hill may be congratulated on the excellent manner in which *several of his subordinates* have served the Department!" So he may. Of these subordinates the foremost may be mentioned my friend, Mr. Pestanji Dorabji Khandalawalla, as good an engineer as he is a linguist and a *littérateur*. Mr. Pestanji has since been Private Secretary and Palace Superintendent, working in both capacities so well as to make himself indispensable at head-quarters. Besides Mr. Hill, the State Engineer, Baroda has or had a Special Engineer,

MR. CROSTHWAIT,

who seems to have rendered signal service to the State in connection with the water-supply and drainage works, and also in devising means to restrain the floods of the Viswámitri—an annually recurring danger. It is satisfactory to learn that the bunds (embankments) erected by Mr. Crosthwait have proved very useful. Mr. Crosthwait is also reported to have investigated the means of lowering the floods; and it is to be hoped that his suggestions may prevail. Sir Mádav Row's allusion to the durability of the old unscientific bridges is very apt in this

connection. It is a foregone conclusion with all, I presume, that the old works executed by practical native engineers are generally far better, at least in their usefulness, than the æsthetic "lumps of sugar" we now see springing up in all parts of India. These latter afford an illustration of engineering science *run mad*.

MR. DINSHÁ ARDESHIR TALEYÁRKHÁN.

A name very well known as that of an ardent and honest politician. As a journalist Mr. Dinshá has done much good service, at the same time making himself very unpopular with the *ultra-patriotic* class, whose dictum seems to be, "Let a hundred people die under native misrule, rather than ten of them be saved by British interference." Mr. Dinsha's persistent and manly exposure of the mismanagement of the Native States of Sucheen, Dharampore, Káthiawár, and even Baroda, has resulted in great public good ; and his waging war single-handed is, in itself, indicative of the moral stamina he possesses. Besides editing the *Gujarát Mitra*, he has written innumerable pamphlets, and I suspect he has dabbled in blank verse too ! But in spite of the latter weakness, which comes natural to all—even Bacon and Franklin have perpetrated some glum atrocities

of the kind—I hardly know of any native journalist of Western India who is his better in perseverance and devotion, though there have been some capital native journalists, too, in the past generation. Mr. Dinshá comes of a highly respectable family as his surname implies, for what I know, descended from Persian nobility. His fathers were in the service of the Moghuls and more recently of the British Government. My friend has travelled a good deal, and is a man of large views and generous impulses. His services are much esteemed by European officers.

Since the assumption of ministerial office by Sir Mádav Row, Mr. Dinshá has been working under him as Municipal Commissioner of Baroda, in which capacity he is reported to have rendered a good account of himself.

“That officer is full of genuine zeal and diligently looks after details with care and thoughtfulness. He has made steady approaches to order and system in the operations of his Department. He has overcome, with temper and tact, the natural apathy or positive resistance of the people concerned. Indeed, he may be said to have achieved a certain measure of popularity for his Department. I have heard

expressions of appreciation and thankfulness from even such citizens as are distinguished for intense conservative ideas. And strangers visiting the city at distant intervals have borne testimony to progressive improvement in terms satisfactory and encouraging."

So says Sir Mádav Row, and the Agent bears him out. This is another refutation, if needed, of the prejudice that journalists never make good men of business. Mr. Janárdan S. Gadgil is also a member of the fourth estate whose services to Baroda have proved valuable.

DEWAN BAHADUR MANIBHAI JASABHAI.

One of the ablest Native administrators on this side is my friend Dewan Bahádur Manibhai Jasabhai. He worked at Baroda for three years as Public Works Minister, and gave satisfaction to all who came in contact with him. I believe he had the confidence of the Maharájá, and had many prospects of promotion till he rose, perhaps, the highest. But having been earnestly invited to rejoin his appointment as Dewán of Cutch, Mr. Manibhai left Baroda in 1883 amidst universal regret. This is not the place in which to dwell upon

the career of the valuable "Nágar Mani," as his admirers call him. Mr. Manibhai has now come back to Baroda as Ná'yab Dewán.

MR. F. A. ELLIOT, C.S.,

has been tutor, and latterly chief adviser, to His Highness the young Guicowár, his pukka appointment being that of Settlement Officer. Mr. Elliot has succeeded very well with his delicate, and I believe arduous, duties. His reports of the progress made by his princely pupil are in themselves a certificate of his own abilities and character. The young Guicowár was fortunate in having secured the services of such a man for his guide, philosopher and friend. It appears that Mr. Elliot did not pull on well with Sir Madav Row, though he says he has always kept aloof from Durbár *khatpat*. But it is impossible to speak with certainty about what happens behind the curtain. As an outsider I noticed an unpleasant tension, and regretted it.

The High School is flourishing as well as it could under Mr. Tait. That officer is highly spoken of for his abilities and zeal. Mr. Tait has Mr. Harold Littledale for his assistant.

The Guicowár *Sirkár* has founded several scholarships and prizes, and Kázi Sháhbuddin bestows two scholarships on deserving Mahomedan students. Not the least noticeable feature of State Education in Baroda is the establishment of the Anglo-Indian Institution, for European and Eurasian children. General Watson, Governor-General's Agent at Baroda, every way a worthy successor to Mr. Melvill, has won the gratitude of the Camp inhabitants by starting a Native Girls' School at his expense.*

The vernacular schools are flourishing under Mr. Bhogilál Pránvallabdas, a well-known educational officer of extended experience.

One of the most useful agencies of the Administration is the Medical Department, virtually, I presume, under the control of Dr. Bhálchandra, the hero of the Cæsarian section.† It is curious to see how kindly Hindus have of late been taking to the medical profession. They seem to be most successful in the line, too; decidedly more so than the Parsis. That is owing to the fact that they do not become

* Written in 1884.

† He has performed sixteen operations known by that name.

quite *biláti** in their treatment. There are in all six medical officers in the Baroda territory, among whom Dr. Bhál stands pre-eminent for his rare abilities and tact. "He is specially conspicuous for popularity, and has earned confidence at the Palace," says the Dewan, and this is saying a good deal. Dr. Bhálchandra has since left Baroda service and is now engaged in a large and lucrative practice at Bombay. The other officers, too, are doing much useful work in various sections, especially my good friend Mr. Rustomji Hormusji.

I do not think I have omitted any officer except the argus-eyed Appáji Rámchandra (now retired), whose close grasp on the Guicowár's money-bags is making "itself felt more or less in all Departments." Ráo Sáheb Appaji was the right man in the right place, and the heads of all Departments stood in awe of him. In him was centred the glory of good works at Baroda. Mr. Motirám Goculdás, too, is a likely man—quite a gem of a Treasurer.

Dewán Bahádur Luxamon Jagannath is the present Minister at Baroda. He is very highly spoken of, and is left in the charge of the State,

* Europeanised.

with a Council, in His Highness's absence. I believe he has done excellent work as Revenue Officer.

NON-OFFICIAL MAGNATES.

Of the non-official notabilities at Baroda, Gopál Rao Myrál, the renowned banker, or his heir, stands first. He is the Rothschild of Baroda, and knows—at least his books could tell you—much more about the Guicowárs than any one else could. Among the *Sirdár* class the Nawáb of Baroda is eminent. The Nawáb Sáheb is hospitality itself. Some time ago he gave a supper party to the *élite* of Baroda. Knives, forks, and spoons were introduced for the first time ; and though the guests may be supposed to have handled them freely, those instruments of torture did grievous mischief to the worthy host and his heirs. Medical aid was immediately required. But let us draw a veil over bleeding tongues and chopped fingers ! The poor Nawáb left “this world of woes” about six years ago. He was a very popular man.

A

EN ROUTE TO AHMEDABAD.

On the 1st of April, 1878, we left for Ahmedabad. The poor famine-stricken people came to us in crowds wherever the train stopped, looking more like apparitions than beings in flesh and blood. About Dákore, Umreth, and other adjoining places, the distress seems to have been very severe and general. Still the prospect that lay before the eye was pleasanter than we had hitherto seen.

In the carriage we occupied were a Vakil and a philosophic Shráwak. The Vakil had an opera-glass, which he seemed to mistake for a telescope. He said he espied Ahmedabad through it at the distance of about 60 miles. This the Shráwak said he could not see. Whilst the two were wrangling, the train stopped at an intermediate station, and in came a Hindu gentleman, a Bania, large-bodied and eminently ugly. He had his little son with him, who was the very image of his father—a bloated body, a pock-marked face, without any visible eyes, and excessively *nosey*. The train stopped at a small station again, and the Bania prepared to alight. He first handed over his kit to

the porter, then that boy of his, so very leisurely, that before he found time to drag himself out, the engine gave the whistle. The Bania's wife, who had just issued from one of the third-class carriages, gave a shriek on seeing her lord's danger. The man turned pale and yellow by turns. Meantime a couple of Parsi officials rushed to his assistance. "Come to my arms," said one fat official to the Bania. But the latter would not accept the loving invitation. "Stop the train," he cried hoarsely. At last they got the motion considerably slackened, and that Parsi again said, "Come to my arms." The Bania replied, "Stop it altogether." And stopped it was. Here he stepped out, and we started. That Bania is a *Sowkár*; * I afterwards ascertained that he was a *Desái*.† He came from Gandevi.

LOCUST-DESÁIS.

This *Desái*, or the family of *Desáis* rather, are petty officials under the *Guicowár*, and possess holdings in *Nowsári*, *Gandevi* and *Billimorá*. The revenue and other exactions of former *Guicowárs* were hard enough to bear for the poorer people of these parts; but the

* Money-lender. † Small hereditary dignitary.

Desáis, taking advantage of the misrule of later days, seem to have added their own taxes and imposts to those already existing. And these iniquitous exactions were, it is said, levied till recently, even though the unhappy peasantry and traders were absolutely unable to bear them.

It is curious to see how these Desáis' imposts were first brought into existence. The Desái, for instance, had, in prosperous years, a superfluity of grain. He left a few maunds* at the house of each of the villagers, and after a short interval billed them for the grain—at fancy rates. This was sharp practice enough. But it was only the beginning. Next year the Desái forgot to leave the grain for the family, but a sum similar to that paid the year before, when the grain had been left, had to be paid over again! And thus came the grain-impost into existence. This practice seems as infamous as the robbing of the people by the Turkish village tyrants. As is the case with grain, so with anything else of which the Desái had once a superfluity. The superfluity could not often recur; but the imposition of Rs. 500 to Rs.600 on each community remains to this day.†

* A Bombay maund is about 28 lbs. avoirdupois.

† Written nine years ago.

After a good deal of clamouring on the part of the more intelligent of the townsmen, the Dewan of Baroda seems to have deputed a NáyeB Suba to investigate the nature of the discontent which had become general throughout the three towns above referred to. This NáyeB Suba, the *Gujarát Mitra* informs us, made himself and family the guests of the Desái, and it was at the Desái's place and in his presence, where he could smile or frown at will, that the Subá held his court of inquiry. If this be so, nothing could be more reprehensible even in the Guicowár territory. But getting over all these cruel hindrances, the writer has been able to record the following disclosures made in the course of inquiry, which may convey some idea of desperation to which the poor people have been driven :—Parsi shopkeepers of Gandevi deposed that the Desái has been, for years, exacting from them Rs. 51 a year. Parsi boat-builders of Billimora have been paying the Desái Rs. 5 on every craft prepared, besides fuel, timber, &c. Those who pleaded inability were deprived of their tools, and thus left without the means of earning a livelihood. Some Hindus, whose business it is to weigh loads of fuel or other things, were taxed Rs. 40 a year, and are now taxed

Rs. 260 a year ! On one bale of tobacco the Desái exacts Rs. 21. From the Mussalman weavers he takes fifty yards of the cloth they weave. Some years ago the Desái had a *nautch** party, and he wanted cloth for a pavilion. That grant of cloth has been made perpetual ! Besides, the poor fellows have to pay something in cash too. Hindu weavers have to supply sixty yards of cloth. The butchers, too, have to contribute Rs. 25 a year towards the Desái's maintenance, as also the dyers in a similar sum. The Vanjárás† have to pay a certain sum per bag of grain. All these taxes are alleged to be the Desái's *own*, over and above the Guicowár's. The Guicowár *Sirkár* has its house tax ; the Desái has a corollary to it, named the *choolá* tax, or tax on cooking fire, of Rs. 2-8 a house. Then comes the Márwári, who has to pay the *jájam* or carpet tax ; also the *ghee* tax. That is, these Shylocks of the village had to present to the Desái so much carpet and so much *ghee* a year. But when the Desái had too much of carpet and *ghee*, he asked for their equivalent in money. " We paid for some years," deposes the epigrammatic Márwári. " We don't do so now : *our will*." That is

* Performance by hired dancing-girls.

† Or Banjaris, itinerant grain-carriers.

sturdy commonsense, and once in a way I sympathise with the sordid miser. The Dheds had to pay hide tax, that is a substitute in coin for the hides of animals they skin from time to time. They now plead inability. The fishermen are not left out of the list, poor miserable creatures, barely able to eke out a breakfast of seeds, fish, or anything that comes handy! They, too, are utterly unable to oblige the Desái.

BILLIMORA.

I have seen Billimora and the adjoining parts, and am assured by respectable informants that the account I give above of the Desái's exactions is substantially correct. It is to be hoped the iniquities have by this time ceased to be practised. My trip to Billimora was not quite uneventful.

RAILWAY SPEED, ETC.

I left for bunder Billimora by mail train. The train went at high speed, which, on ascertaining it, is found to be about twenty miles an hour. Compared with bullock hackeries, Mr. Duxbury's* dragweight is much faster, to be

* The energetic Traffic Manager of the B. B. and C. I. Railway.

sure. But it is *nothing*, speaking absolutely ; because I am told that the strain of any greater speed would be too much for the yielding soil. It is, however, to be noted that what is wanted in speed is made up for by noise. The carriages hobble along with ominous squeaks that indicate a state of chronic rheumatism. The engine seems to be suffering from constipation, and the faint and sickly sobs it now and then gives are not to be mistaken. Then the dust, the clouds of dust that assail one on the line ! Let the authorities take hold of the rosiest of the station-masters and rip him open. Thus dissected, the creature may emit such overwhelming volumes of dust as would cover the management with shame and remorse. Insomnia and dysentery are said to be inseparable from railway service. And what wonder ?

PUBLIC ROADS AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

Immediately on alighting I entered the town of Billimora. It was a moonlit night, and I preferred walking. In the mofussil I generally walk, as, in driving, there is a chance of dislodging the liver. Billimora dust is no way inferior to that of Broach—it is subtle, light, and knee-deep. The road leading into the town is said to be a *made* road ; it may have been so before

it was recently unmade. There is a romance about the road. A few years ago the Minister of the State was driving on it at night, when, by some mishap, the *ghari** upturned and deposited His Excellency's whole weight in the dust. That was a great fall. The noise awakened the housewives. The Dewan, at his time of life, was not able to pick himself up. So when the women came up to the scene of the fall, they saw a well-dressed old stranger grovelling in the dust, with sowárs and sepoy's chattering and bowing at a distance, as is their wont. Then said a spinster old, approaching the figure in the dust, "Brother, what are ye about?" And he replied, "Sister, go thy way; the night is dark, and I am the Dewan Sahib. Think not I have fallen; I am merely trying, by personal experience, to see if the road requires repair." Then asked a maid of twenty-three, looking archly at the fallen figure, "Old man, art thou satisfied?" "Yes, my child," replied the pious Dewan, picking himself up by main effort. Before entering the *palki*,† the Dewan turned round and¹ said, "Good people, do not trouble me with a petition; I know you need a good road, and will give you one."

* Carriage. † Palanquin.

This story teaches the value of *personal* experience. How much I wish that a Legislative Councillor had now and then a fall, a Town Councillor now and then a shower of dirty Jupiter in the streets, a Police Commissioner set upon by rabid dogs !

HOW ROADS ARE MADE.

This road was first made by H. H. Khunde-row. Mad Mulhár Rao, on coming to the *gádi*, paid a visit of state to Billimora. Now, Mulhár Rao, as we all know, was a man of honour. So he refused to enter the town by the road made by his brother. He ordered a special road to be made for him in a *few hours*. The officers mowed down fields, telling the owners that His Highness the Guicowár was to *sanctify the soil* by driving through it. Mulhár Rao drove through the road thus improvised, and is said to have paid Rs. 25,000, which went into the officials' pockets, the owners of the fields making the best of the half-destroyed harvest. On this wise are Public Works conducted in some Native States.

BILLIMORA PROPER.

Billimora belongs mostly to Parsis, who have a Tower of Silence there, and other religious

and social institutions. The Parsis here are respectable people, very fat and very prayerful. There are Hindus and Mahomedans too. But the bulk of the population consists of the fisher people, low-class Hindus, dark, thick-skinned, and very poor. I stood on the main road for about two hours one evening to feast mine eyes on the beauties of nature : but it was a weary waiting and without avail. Billimora does not boast of rural beauties—pariah dogs cannot pass under that title. But fish is cheap, and plentiful, and good. Now and then you can get a pull at the toddy* flagon. But the liquid is too sweet to be the genuine article.

Billimora is under a magistrate, a very good man, a relative of the Suba. This magistrate is said to be a very strict man, and as he fines people right and left, he might hope to be a Suba very shortly. He is a reformed Hindu, I am glad to say. Under the magistrate there is a Parsi Foujdár,† an energetic and obliging sort of man, with about fifty police-men and 200 street dogs under him. This latter force may pass under the name of the Guicowár's Canine Cavalry. I was told by a local wag that Sir Mádav Row offered this cavalry, as

* The palm juice.

† Police Inspector.

well as the gold guns of the Guicowár, to Lord Lytton when the Afghan war was at its height; and though the Dewan is said to have been in earnest, Lord Lytton took it for a joke. Sir T. M. has ever since been in disgrace. This may be taken for a traveller's tale.

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NARIAD.

GOING up to Ahmedabad one may spend a very agreeable hour or two at Nariád. This is one of the most prosperous towns in Gujarát, and a stronghold of Nágar Brahmans, leaders of the Brahman community in the province. Nariád may be cited as an example of the rapid growth of a township under British rule. It has a mixed population of Hindus and Mahomedans, the former largely preponderating in number and in influence. The cause of this disparity will be explained hereafter. Nariad boasts of a very rich soil which is well utilized by the Patidars, perhaps the most successful agricultural community in Western India. The Desais of Nariad are, I believe, at the head of the Patidar family, and their Tobacco Farm is well worth a visit. It is about these parts mainly that you find the wealthier class of cultivators. Many of these families have sprung up on the ruin of capitalists at Bombay and elsewhere during the American War of 1863 when the Share Mania was at its height. Some of the small farmers in Gujarát are said to have grown so rich of a sudden that they had silver spokes

for the wheels of their carts. One of these, when asked by his goldsmith how much of the precious metal he was to use for an ornament for his wife, is reported to have replied lazily—" *Oh, one or two pounds*" in weight. Of a cultivator in the Deccan I am told that he got such a quantity of silver rupees for a piece of land at Bombay that he actually went crazy in contemplating the heap before him. The fever of speculation, however, passed away, and to-day the people of "rich Gujarát" are decidedly *poor*, though a more contented lot it would be difficult to find in the country.

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IN TO AHMEDABAD.

BUT to return to the train taking us to Ahmedabad. We reached the station late in the evening, and finding a shigram waiting for hire, thrust ourselves and luggage into it. We were driven over excellent roads to the "Káranj," a delightfully situated house belonging to Mr. Cowasji Muncherji Karanjwala. I was very kindly received by my host, and passed a very agreeable fortnight under his roof. Mr. Cowasji is noted—as was his good old father before him—for loyalty and liberality, qualities rare enough in the mofussil. He has always been a friend of the people, and ready to promote every scheme of public usefulness. He is honorary secretary to various public institutions; and in the consideration of all public measures his advice and suggestions are often sought by the authorities. Every visitor to Ahmedabad returns charmed with Mr. Cowasji's hospitality and the range of his local knowledge of all conditions of life. Among his many acts of public service, those by which he will be longest remembered, and which ought to have received some substantial recognition from Government, are his exertions during the flood at Ahmedabad a few years

ago. Those who have read the accounts of his continuous efforts to save life and to support the rescued at considerable personal risk and expense, are of opinion that Ahmedabad could not be sufficiently grateful to its public-spirited Parsi citizen. Mr. Cowasji is, I believe, very popular at Ahmedabad, and enjoys the confidence of all sections of society. He is very active in matters municipal, and, like the zealous Mr. Mahipatrám Ruprám, goes about from ward to ward when cholera and other epidemic diseases rage most. Such men cannot afford always to please the Sáheb.*

SIGHTS.

Next morning my excellent host took me out for sight-seeing. Ahmedabad is rich in sights. The remains of Mahomedan architectural art are magnificent even in their ruin. The mosques and mausoleums, tombs and tanks and pleasure-grounds, vie with one another in grandeur and beauty. Nor is the Hindu style of architecture less attractive. For eight days consecutively I *did* the town, often with mine host for guide, sometimes with a Mahomedan guide picked up in the streets. Mr. Karanjwala

* Written in 1880.

knows Ahmedabad probably as no other living man knows it. So much has been written about the architectural importance of this Mahomedan capital, that I have nothing new to add, and I hate borrowing. Of recent accounts, the best is Sir T. C. Hope's spirited historical and descriptive sketch.

MAKING FRIENDS.

This day I had the pleasure of making the personal acquaintance of my friend Rao Saheb Mahipatrám Ruprám, Principal of the Gujarát Training College. Mr. Mahipatrám remained for over an hour, and a long and very interesting talk did we have together. Mahipatrám Ruprám is a notable man—an educationist, reformer, and patriot, a scholar of much literary taste and ability. More valuable even than Mr. Cowasji's services are those of Mr. Mahipatrám. Though an official and a Hindu, he stands first in independence and public spirit. It is a sight to see the righteous little man denouncing error or injustice with his eyes flashing fire and his arms thrown up in despair. He has done and suffered more in the cause of social reform than perhaps any Hindu I know of in Gujarát. He is earnest in whatever he undertakes, and, for a Hindu, wonderfully

persevering. After the death of the heroic Karsandás Mulji, Mahipatrám has been perhaps our only Hindu reformer deserving that title. Of lip-reformers there is no lack at Ahmedabad or in India for that matter; but the genuine man is only too rarely met with. With a truer education than hitherto, I hope we shall have really earnest workers in the field. May the example of Karsandás's noble life be always before my countrymen! Mr. Mahipatrám introduced me to Mr. S. N. Tagore, the well-known Hindu Civilian. Of him I have spoken elsewhere. He was Sessions Judge at Ahmedabad for a pretty long time. The Ahmedabadis speak of him in the high terms, not only as an official, but as a gentleman and friend. Indeed, I have all along thought that Satyendra Náth Tagore would have still better adorned the Pulpit than the Bench. But as he does credit to both functions, it would be churlish to repine.

Next day came Mr. Bholanath Sarabhai,* a Rao Bahadur, a Sirdar, and an esteemed Government pensioner. Mr. Bholanath is an elderly gentleman, and ranks among the re-

* Since deceased.

formers. But age has taught him to be cautious, and I do not wonder that he is not such a favourite with ardent youngsters as with men of his own time. But all the same he is an estimable old gentleman, and if he can do good by word of mouth, he will not be silent.

That evening I had the honour of a call from my friend Khan Bahadur Cooverji Cowasji Sabáwala, the Deputy-Collector, a sensible practical worker, with a character for independence which few native officials can boast of. Mr. Cooverji is a man of the old school. He hates idle talk. Not given to insincere profession, and too rough-hewn by nature for mere sentiment, he is a terror to our *civilised* dandies. He will gladly shake an honest labourer by the hand, but holds the scented exquisite in horror. Mr. Cooverji* bears a high reputation in official circles.

Next in order came Rao Bahadur Mukunrái Manirái, the Sub-Judge, a very quiet unobtrusive gentleman. He is seldom heard of in public, but is none the less a useful worker. I believe Mr. Mukunrái is a very studious man. His official career has been blameless, and he is popular as a citizen.

* Since retired.

Having very little time left on hand now, I gave a hasty call to Rao Bahadur Nuggershet Premábhai Hemábhai.* Sett Premábhai is the leading Hindu here, and was a millionaire before the days of the Share Mania of 1864-5. He was once a Member of the Bombay Legislative Council. He showed me several ancient Persian documents, proving that his ancestors were holders of great *jagirs*† from the Moghul Emperors. Mr. Premábhai is by no means a poor man even in these days. Personally he is a worthy, amiable, asthmatic gentleman. Professionally, he is a *Sowcár*, an astute man of business for all his airs of innocent simplicity. Sett Premábhai is a Jain Shráwak by caste; and a few years ago he more than amused his friends by marrying himself and his eldest son to twin sisters. It would be interesting to determine the degree of consanguinity between his progeny by the new wife and *his son's* progeny by her *sister* AND *daughter-in-law*!

I also called upon Mr. Cursetji Manockji, the Small Cause Court Judge, son of the famous Mr. Manockji Cursetji. Mr. Cursetji appeared to be an interesting and intelligent man. But

* Since deceased.

† Lands or revenues assigned by Government.

if he were to appear in his usual dress before one of our Dustoors, he would send off His Reverence into hysterics. Mr. Cursetji dresses like a European, and does not cover his head—which is a scandal unto a Parsi.

I must not omit Kavi Dalpatrá́m Dáyábhái, the blind bard of Gujarat. Kavi Dalpatrá́m is a popular Hindu Gujarati poet, and has written much of the sort of poetry that we can have in the country. He has a great rival in Kavi Narmadáshankar Lálshankar of Surat. This latter seems to have more power, the former more simplicity and grace. Dalpatrá́m gave me a very warm greeting, and would not let me leave him without a formal benediction. Another leading Hindu at Ahmedabad is Mr. Bechardas Ambaidas, C.S.I. Like Mr. Premábhái he was for a time member of the Governor's Council. He is now old, but can do battle for the people when in good company.

Before leaving Ahmedabad I had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of the Rev. Mr. Gillespie, of the local mission, to whom I was introduced by my late lamented friend Mr. Joseph Taylor. And now enough of acquaintances and friends, and enough, for the nonce, of Ahmedabad too.

GUJARÁT POLITICS.

As I have hinted before, I do not care to pass for a politician,—certainly not for a professional politician. I hate to moralise or dogmatise even on my pet hobbies. But it is necessary here to scatter a few passing reflections on the political life of Gujarát, though kept on the background of the portrait presented in this volume. In writing about the capital of Gujarát, I could not well avoid mention of the political activity brought to the surface by Lord Ripon's beneficent and sympathetic rule. I refer to the experiment of Local Self-Government which has already been tried by the public-spirited citizens of Ahmedabad with marked success. Both the people of Surat and Ahmedabad have, on the whole, given a good account of themselves in this connection. But like other parts of the country Gujarát is ruled by the Collector, whom the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* very aptly describes as the "mother-in-law of the people." Now, for my part, I am sure the Collector means well in most cases; but he wants to have everything his own way. Shut up in his bureau, and surrounded by parasites, the Collector is impervious to the light of outside opinion. He is too paternal

even for a community of political orphans, and unless he learns to move not only *for* but *with* the people, I doubt if the district autocrat will ever become popular.

At Surat the Collector seems to have made up his mind to give the people the benefit of electric light and to extend the little public park.* Now, the rate-payers have been crying for a supply of pure water and for other pressing sanitary reforms. But the Collector, who is also the Chairman of the Municipality, assisted by official and officialised members, rough-rides the views of the non-official minority. The rate-payers' representatives try appeal, obstruction and agitation in turn, but to little purpose. The Collector-President no doubt believes that he knows what popular wants are more than the people themselves do. But one cannot blame the people if they urge—"Sir, give us the necessities of life first, and then the costly luxuries of electric light and artistic recreation grounds."

Ahmedabad† seems to have fared worse than Surat, in spite of two or three very strong advocates of the people on the Municipal Board.

* Written in 1884.

† Written in 1884.

There too, the officials, enjoying almost unlimited powers of action and control, seem to have spent public moneys on costly, and at times, very questionable works. One of the responsible subordinates has come in for sharp criticism. But it is the interest of his superiors to save him further trouble. It may be asked how such things can happen when there are elected members on the board. The explanation is that the chief executive officers do not care much for this inefficient controlling presence, and having a number of other duties to attend to, they allow details to be worked out by irresponsible subordinates. For instance, just see how many powers and responsibilities one single officer is charged with.

He is First Class Magistrate, with powers of summary jurisdiction ; Land Inquiry and Survey Officer for the City, Government Opium Agent, Abkari Officer and permanent Municipal Chairman. Add to all this the fact that the Collector-President usually sees with the subordinate's eyes and speaks with the subordinate's mouth, and you cease to wonder how an officer could be guilty of incredible high-handedness. Who could oppose such an officer even if he were to deign to consult his

colleagues before taking action? There is another way of looking at the matter. How can we expect smooth and regular working of municipal affairs where the official chairman has so many other duties to distract him? It is to obviate this difficulty that Lord Ripon insists upon extended non-official co-operation.

As for the principle of election, though accepted in theory, it is not so easy of practical recognition. In one part of Gujarát the work of election to the Municipal Board is said to have been entrusted by the local authorities largely to cart-drivers, day labourers and petty tradesmen. These enlightened electors, I am told, were bullied into voting for official favourites, and the result of such election must have been just the reverse of what the authors of the Self-Government scheme anticipated. One Police officer is supposed to have sent for the oil-sellers in town, and to have compelled them to return men of his choice!

Under the circumstances how can the people of Gujarát advance in political education? Representatives of the people ask to be allowed

to manage their own local affairs. It is possible that at the outset they may mismanage things, and hence Government may be justified in reserving to itself certain powers of check and control. But surely a people who are familiar with the *panchayet* system—a time-honoured institution—may be expected to work the present scheme with a fair amount of success. If there is fear of partial failure in the beginning, that is no reason why the experiment so familiar to the rural community should be withheld any longer. The people have been creeping long enough; now that they have learnt to stand erect under British rule, let them walk about and feel their way. I think it is the interest as well as the duty of the official class to make over part of their self-imposed task to educated representatives of the rate-payers. And above all they must allow the public to elect representatives of their own free choice.

Here I may as well enter a protest against the manner in which district officers now and then seek to foster public spirit by the recognition of what has come to be ironically called "loyalty." In a country like this it is a great mistake to commend individuals as

“loyal,” that is more loyal than their neighbours. Besides being an impolitic course, it leads to jobbery. The Collector recommends his “loyal” friend, not because the creature is faithful to Government, but because he truckles to his master. When such a sneak and sycophant has no merits worth mentioning, no example of public spirit to be credited to him, his patron puts him forward as “loyal.” This is the secret of three-fourths of “loyal” recommendations, and Government would do well to enquire what has made a particular man more loyal than others before throwing away public honours on him. I have said above that such nominations are impolitic. Look at the result : by making a man Khan Bahadur or some such thing, the Collector fancies he has set an example to the public. Nothing like it. People know the Collector’s spy and emissary, and they detest him. His elevation may secure what fidelity the creature himself is capable of. But at the same time that the Collector has secured one personal friend he has probably created a hundred enemies against the State. It is from this point of view that “loyal” nominations are to be condemned as leading to wide-spread discontent. How many honest workers there

are in the mofussil, spending their strength and substance on the good of the people, and thus helping Government in a variety of ways, without being able to please the Sáheb? But such men are generally neglected, and instead we sometimes see men of straw put forward, men not only defying the code of honour, but destitute of the common decencies of life. These fellows manage to hoodwink the district autocrat and terrorise over the people, obtruding their vulgar "loyalty" whenever called to account. Let public spirit be recognised by all means. But it is the service rendered to the State and to Society, not to one or two official patrons, that makes a man "loyal."

On the other hand, although Gujarát may be said to be looking up, as a whole, in public spirit, its municipal management is by no means free from reproach. If there is too much over-zeal on the official side, there is too much apathy or obstruction on the part of popular representatives. These latter seem to have imperfect notions of their responsibilities. They generally take too long to be convinced of the necessity of sanitary reform, and when convinced they manage to give it

the go-by till goaded into taking some sort of action. Such action, it goes without saying, is often half-hearted. The desire to economize seems to be too great with some of the Commissioners. They forget that false economy is worse than extravagance. A good scheme of drainage and a plentiful supply of pure water—these the people must have without further delay, even if they have to pay a slightly enhanced tax for it.

Gujarát is pretty well to the front in matters political. In some parts it is too much so, for other interests. For instance, there is no organization, that I know of, for agricultural reform, throughout the province, while politics claim several associations willing to co-operate with the central body in the capital of the Presidency. The great want here, as in other parts of the country, is that of honest self-sacrificing effort. Let us hope the want will be supplied as education spreads, though as yet the prospects are not very cheering.

As the social life of Gujarát will be described elsewhere we need not pause here for more than a glance. Gujarát is my home, and almost every foot of ground on which I stand during my walks in the outskirts makes

me sing "Home, sweet home." During the spring especially, the rural scenery is perfect, and the air is laden with a delicious fragrance which I do not expect from more favoured spots. For me the very dust of the field has a certain aroma missed in the artificial gardens of Bombay. It is delightful to sally out early in the morning while the town is in repose, and to *eat the air*, as we natives have it, free of cost. You may have something more substantial, though not half so delicious as morning air—for instance, milk, cream, cheese, and solids of sorts, and wash them down with a flagon of toddy.*

Toddy was very badly treated in Gujarát by the Abkari Department, and even now, in spite of the efforts made by our citizen Governor† to liberate the people's elixir, it is not so accessible to the poor Gujarátis as it should be. The farming or monopoly system is radically bad, and so long as it is in favour the good intentions of the Government with regard to the Abkari administration will not be appreciated. Toddy is as much the food of our

* Fresh palm-juice.

† Lord Reay.

people as it is their drink, and in an unfermented state it is perfectly harmless. During his stay in Bombay I sent a bottle of fresh toddy to Lord Rosebery, who wrote to say he 'thought it very palatable' in that state. Whatever may be said about fermented toddy, and the liquor distilled from it, or from the Mowra flower, I have never heard any justification attempted by the officials for killing the trade in fresh toddy, except that a free sale may lead to illicit distillation. The Abkari Department, so highly paid and numerously manned, is strong enough to check such distillation. Why should Government starve the populace out of their innocent enjoyment and thus drive them to strong drinks? They are already suspected of destroying the trade in raw toddy, in order to increase revenue on the liquor traffic. Lord Reay has done a great deal towards liberating toddy in other zillas. Perhaps it is not so easy to do this with regard to Surat. But I hope this centre of toddy trade in Gujarát will not be neglected.

THE PEOPLE.

HINDUS.

THE Hindus of Gujarát are divided into several castes, the most considerable, on the whole, being the Vaishnavas, the followers of Vishnu. They are merchants, traders, vakils (lawyers), and gentlemen at large. As merchants and traders they are even now successful. The vakils, a shrewd race, with some exceptions, are licensed pettifoggers; the gentlemen at large are easy-going, well preserved individuals, who generally live and die to themselves. Large numbers, especially Brahmins and Kayasthas, are in Government service, and are believed to make excellent servants, as a rule, both in the judicial and the revenue departments. But education is not so widespread in Gujarát as in Maharashtra, though female education is in a fairly satisfactory state, more so in the Ahmedabad centre. The enterprise and honesty which once characterised mercantile dealings are unfortunately not so general at the present day. Transactions involving enormous sums used to be carried on in Gujarát verbally;

and some of my readers may have heard of the Gujarát *Sowcar* who received a large advance of money *on a hair of his moustache* as a pledge ! But those days are gone from Gujarát. To-day the best cultivated beard may not fetch the *Sowcar* a loan of Rs. 10. We see mutual distrust and petty jealousies amongst traders. Commercial morality seems to be at a low ebb, as in Bombay. Let me give the instance of a Hindu merchant of extensive credit, who took the benefit of the Insolvency Act some time ago, and thus ruined hundreds of widows and orphans who had entrusted their little all to his care. When these unlucky wights besought him for some relief as *charity*, the *Sowcar* mildly said to them, "My dear friends, why do you want money ? You are poor and can beg. Can I beg ? And knowing this the *Sirkar* (Government) has relieved me of liability to you. But do not, I pray, think that I am happy. No, no ; with your money I have to settle their dowries on my daughters," &c., &c.

A very pleasant way of settling dowries to be sure. But instances of fraudulent insolvency are common among all classes. We have insolvents who have taken the benefit of what we call " the white-washing Act," three

and four times each ; and after each white-washing the insolvent has suddenly come into a fortune with which he endows his wife or mother or a religious institution ! He often builds houses, opens a new business, or goes in for philanthropic pursuits with the money he has so miraculously obtained soon after having been "white-washed." He has no thought, even then, of the hundreds whose homes he has made desolate by his refined rascality. But I must not omit to mention that in this respect Bombay city is worse off than the mofussil towns of Gujarát or Maharashtra where "white-washing" has not become a fashionable pastime. The Insolvency Act needs revision. The Judge is often handicapped in dealing with a fraudulent debtor and not unoften in granting discharge to the honest but unfortunate man. Fortunately, this defect in the law will be soon amended, thanks to the good sense of two successive Law Members of the Government of India, Mr. Ilbert and Mr. Scoble, and to dissatisfaction expressed by Mr. Justice Scott and others.

This merchant is one of the Vaishnava sect, to which belong Baniás, Bhattiás and others. Besides indulging in idolatry, the Vaishnavas

deify the heads of their Church, who are about thirty-seven in number, scattered over Gujarát, Káthiawár, and many other parts of India. The deified priest is the Maháráj,* the visible incarnation of Vishnu-Krishna, to whom every pious Vaishnava dedicates his or her *tana, mana, dhana* (body, mind, and property), and not only his or her body, mind, and property, but of all those over whom he or she may have control. This is the essence of Mahárájism ; and yet, as all the world knows,

THE VAISHNAVA MAHÁRÁJ OF THE DAY

is a spurious character ; for, though he may claim to be the lineal descendant and visible incarnation of the protecting deity, he is susceptible, perhaps more than ordinary mortals, to pain, pleasure, love, hatred, and other emotions. Pinch him, and he will roar ; tickle him, and he will grin ; gratify his desire, and he will smile upon you ; baulk him of it, and he will put you out of caste ! He is born a lord of ancestors the Lord knows who, and at a very tender age he lords it over a seraglio of intellectual ladies whose husbands are men of highly liberal

* Literally, Great King.

marital sentiment. It is a wonder to many how the Maháráj lives in such a princely style. It is thus :—The Maháráj has a first-rate taxing imagination. Sir John Strachey* is a mere novice before this accomplished taxing-master. The following are supposed to be among the few known imposts the Maháráj derives from his devout followers :—For homage by sight, Rs. 5 ; for homage by touch, Rs. 20 ; for the honour of washing the Mahárája's foot, Rs. 35 ; for the credit of swinging him, Rs. 40 ; for the glory of rubbing sweet unguents on his body, Rs. 42 ; for the joy of sitting with him, Rs. 60 ; for the bliss of occupying the same room with the Madana Murti,† Rs. 50 to Rs. 500. For the pleasure of being kicked by the Maháráj or his attendants, Rs. 11 ; for the privilege of being lashed, Rs. 13 ; for the performance of *Rása Kridá*,‡ Rs. 100 to Rs. 200 ; for *Rása Kirdá* performed by proxy, Rs. 50 to Rs. 100. For the delight of eating the cud of *pán supári* thrown out by the Maháráj, Rs. 17 ; for drinking the water in which the Maháráj has bathed, or in which his foul linen has

* Late Finance Minister of India.

† Madana Murti, the Image of Cupid, as the Maháráj is named by fair worshippers.

‡ Literally, the Essence of Pleasure ; the circular dance.

been washed, squeezed, and wrung, Rs. 19. He also levies many other minor taxes on the events and necessities of life, such as birth, marriage, death, cloth, silk, sugar, &c. The late Mr. Anstey* said he would not touch a Maháráj "with a pair of tongs." Quite right; it would be desecration of the tongs. The Maháráj is a very pious man a week before he dies, and when he dies he goes to where the rest of us do not—that is, to Gaulok.

Having described the average head-priest of the Vaishnavas, as he is supposed to be, I may also give a brief sketch of the career of the late Jivanlálji Maháráj, of Bombay, who is now, they say, a saint in the Vaishnava heaven.

THE LATE JIVANLALJI MAHARAJ.

The Vaishnavas of Western India went into mourning the other day, out of respect to the memory of Jivanlálji Maháráj, one of their great lords. Jivanlálji Maháráj died of "some disease," and, so far, it is not satisfactory, I fear, for his numerous devotees to learn that their great lord, the ever-youthful and immortal, should have succumbed, like an ordinary mortal, to mere physical ailment. What the

* The renowned barrister.

“some disease” was I have no curiosity to know; but many will guess that it was an accumulation of the after-effects of what Englishmen in other spheres of society designate gay life.

Jivanlálji Maháráj was born 51 years ago. There is a profound mystery always overhanging the personal affairs of the Maháráj. That mystery shrouds his birth, it shrouds his life, and I'll be bound that same mystery shrouds his death. We know that he was born in 1829, visibly of human parents; but some hundreds of thousands of his worshippers assert, on their solemn oaths, that Jivanlálji Maháráj existed ages before he was born, and that ages before that event did he carry on that amorous traffic with his fair devotees which is essential, in the Vaishnava creed, to the salvation and beatification of the degraded female soul. Thus Jivanlálji was a philanthropist before he was born; but those earlier “deeds of merit” could not be visible to mortal eye. His life here below and its many exciting incidents are better known. At ten years of age he could tell a maiden from a matron; at that tender age could this incarnation of the divine Krishna Chand warm the iciest hearts of his worshippers; he could toy with

their toes in wantonness ; he could move even the prude into a smile of ineffable happiness. The wondrous boy ! What could he not do ?

At thirty, Jivanlálji was an old man, and took to studying Sanskrit and patronising female education among his people. This was a great triumph for the reform party, who shed tears of joy and wrote odes belauding the Mahárájá's liberality of sentiment, and voted him a handsome memorial. This, by the way, irresistibly reminds one of the old rhyme, recounting how, when another notorious pleasure-seeker fell sick, a "monk he would be" ; but how, when he grew well, "the d——l a monk was he" ! The Maháráj and his worshippers afterwards found out that they were not quite agreed as to the meaning of "female education," but that mattered little. Jivanlálji Maháráj is spoken of as having been "the best among the brethren." I hope this assertion is meant as a compliment, though I very much fear the being *best* among Vaishnava Mahárájás is at the best a sorry way of spending one's life in these days. But we cannot judge of exalted personages from our own standard. It is enough for us that they die sooner or later ; and we are thankful for their thus doing the community the only favour

they can. What becomes of them after death it would be idle speculation to enlarge upon ; but if I am to trust Vaishnava traditions, death means to them the departure of the wearied soul to *Svarga*, where its sole occupation is—flirting with the spirits of those who were the choicest among female friends on earth. The lover and the beloved there drink delight in each other's possession—they drink delight, and when their ethereal cravings are not quite satisfied therewith, they drink curds and eat cocoanuts. If this be a pleasant life—a life of love, flirting with spirits and browsing on curds and cocoanuts—I wish Jivanlálji Maháráj joy of his new life. Let those envy it who can. All that I would desire is, that the spirit of this great lord of ladies innumerable, this “friend of female education,” this sainted patron of native arts and of Sanskrit, may not, in the other world, where the wronged are righted, encounter the meek and persecuted spirit of Karsandás Mulji.*

Europeans and others may think Mahárájism a foul superstition, a system of vile sensualism ; but so long as it is sustained by the “odour of sanctity,” it will hold in thrall tens of thousands of families in India within its embruted cult.

* The great Hindu reformer of Bombay, who died about 1869.

The ritualistic orgies of the Vaishnavas are a proverb of reproach even amongst the superstitious and idolatrous Indians. Every sensible native knows that these priests "pollute their sanctuary," and in the name of religion desolate hearths and homes, and poison the fountain of domestic happiness. Karsandás Mulji, the truly enlightened Bania reformer, waged war on the tribe of Mahárájás twenty five years ago. He was fiercely opposed by rich and influential bigots of his own class ; but so well-aimed were his hits, that at last he drew forth the giants of iniquity from their impregnable stronghold. They dragged Karsandás to the Court of Law ; but in the course of the trial such fearful disclosures were extorted from the Vaishnavas by the redoubtable Anstey, that the cause of the Mahárájás was damaged for ever. The highest tribunal in the land and the entire Indian press pronounced Mahárájism a sink of iniquities. But Karsandás Mulji died, and with him died that spirit of patient heroism which alone could cope with and triumph over bigotry, hypocrisy and sin. Our friend the Vaishnava Maháráj is again relapsing into his old ways. Now and again do we hear of the Maháráj holding high carnival. His is a very tenacious creed, and until some providential visitation overtakes it, it will go on "con-

ceiving mischief and bringing forth iniquity.’
Wherever the Maháráj visits he throws his fair worshippers into tumults of joy inducing utter disregard of what is pure and decent in life. To-day a wife, daughter or sister may be as good as could be wished. Let the Maháráj pass by the locality to-morrow, and she will be another thing altogether. The case is worse where the Mah Purush stays to hold communion (!) Then there is such a rush made by males and females together, and such confusion follows owing to the eager desire to have a look at the Maháráj, that the young and the delicate must fall and be trampled upon. And they *like it*—what will they not suffer for the Madan Murti? Hundreds of men about town become Vaishnavas for the nonce, and mixing in the crowd, take liberties which are incredible. Then may follow a stampede and more trampling, and obscenity. The *Hitechhu* gives a very damaging report of the latest ‘Communion’ at Ahmedabad—six or seven trampled under foot and two said to have died. I thought better arrangements were nowadays made by the Police—certain number going at a time, first women and then men. But what can the Police do in such places? Whatever happens at the Mandir—outrage or death—the *people like it*, and there is an end of

it, I suppose. It is unspeakably sad to find men and women, whose lives in other respects are regulated by the best domestic and social virtues, men of keen wits and women of pure habits, becoming so utterly infatuated by a vile tradition—a tissue of fantastic fables and transparent myths. This is an incomprehensible psychological phenomenon. No husband is more jealous than the Hindu; no wife values her honour so high as the Hindu wife. And still, both make a merit of sacrificing the most cherished social privilege! What power of faith is theirs! But how perverted!

What is the meaning of Maháráj worship? The idea originally meant to portray the soul's yearning for its Creator, more intense than the mother's love for her child, more passionate than the attachment subsisting between man and wife, between the two that are but one. This beautiful idea, not confined, I believe, to Hinduism alone, has been gradually materialised by the sect of Valabha till it has become a standing reproach to his modern followers, outraging as it does all sense of decency and order. It is noteworthy that with all his influence over the infatuated Vaishnavas, the Maháráj is an outcast from amongst Brahmins!

MAHOMEDANS.

THE Mahomedans were once lords of Surat, and more or less of Gujarát. But at present, generally speaking, they are probably the poorest as a class. Their aristocracy live without aim or ambition, men crushed by their own pride of birth, men who would borrow rather than earn, and starve rather than beg. They are ever ready to "grasp the skirts of happy chance." But that chance seldom comes to them. Their life is a round of inane pleasures and idle ceremonials, and the little substance now left to them is being exhausted in playing the king. They are pining for the good old times, and being desperate hopers, they hope away life with astounding patience; they hope and hope and still they hope for "the good times coming." Some of them finding time hanging heavy on their hands, abandon themselves to gratifications of the sense—feasting and dancing and carousing—in such "fool's paradise" they while away time. These have a horror of honest work. Poor fellows! As friends I have always found them faithful and

true. Even when in abject poverty, they will keep up some show of gentility dearer to them than life itself.

Latterly I believe this class has been looking up. Hoping and dreaming has already given way, in some notable cases, to more sober, practical views of life. Altogether, I do believe a change is coming over the spirit of their dreams. The younger generation appears to be more earnest. A larger number of boys go to school, though looking at the population this number is insignificant. High education, too, is beginning to be appreciated, and in a few instances young Islam is really coming up to the front.

In the matter of female education the higher class are better off than their sisters in other communities. Their accomplishments make them bright and agreeable companions. But it would be difficult to call them useful members of society. At home the wife is not the honourable equal of her husband; but a loved inferior, a cherished plaything, so to say, an ornament of the divan more than anything else.

The lower order of Mahomedans are—*unspeakable*. They are generally made up of brag

and bluster; and "truth sticks in their throats." Like their betters they despise work, but unlike them, will beg, borrow, or steal, with the utmost pleasure in life. They live in a world of—wine and woman. Many of them sleep by day, and make the night hideous by their drunken revels. But against all these vices, common to the Mussalman about town, they set off some very fine redeeming traits. As friends and servants they are invaluable; and if you treat them kindly, they will lay down their life in your service. As a rule, they are above that meanness, that petty intriguing spirit and want of gratitude so common among their neighbours. Mussalmans in the villages around Gujarát present a different picture. Their manners and habits correspond to those of Hindus of their position, naturally enough, as they were originally all Hindus, and have mostly to deal with Hindus even now. There is very little of education among men and women of the lower order.

MEER BAKHTÁWAR KHAN.

A Romance in Real Life.

As an instance how the Mahomedan gentry of Gujarát have sacrificed what remained to

them after the loss of their supremacy to their pride of birth, and as explaining how the mean, insinuating Bania has risen on the ruin of his Moslem master, let me give here a leaf out of the unwritten autobiography of my Shrâwak friend, Nyâlchand Nakhodchand of Ahmedabad. Says Nyâlchand:—"I entered the service of Meer Bakhtâwar Khan in 1840. The Meer was then about nineteen years, and only recently married to the beautiful daughter of the Buxi. Meer Bakhtâwar was by nature very reserved, and as he did not agree with his step-mother, his father gave him, soon after his marriage, a separate establishment. He bestowed upon his only son all the ancestral property he could—including houses, lands, ornaments, books and a little of cash. The doting father also made over to his son a few disputed claims against the British Government for compensation. This last doubtful gift was to be reserved to the last and utilised when there was no source of maintenance left. Thus prepared, and fortified by a very respectable fortune from the Buxi, his father-in-law, Meer Bakhtâwar removed to his new residence with his wife and servants. The day after his removal he formally installed me his head

kárbhári,* presenting me with a valuable dress and the right to full management of all his affairs. He could not, and, if he could, would not, attend to any business—it was beneath him.

“The Meer passed his time in the zenana. He so devotedly loved his wife that he never gave her a rival. All the livelong day they were together, this infatuated pair, so absorbed in their new-born happiness. To me, an unmarried Hindu, the Meer’s self-abandonment was shocking. He never left the side of his Bibi—she would not part with him. I had not the *entrée* of the zenana, but learnt from the servants that the master and mistress were inseparable. The Meer stole out of his inner chamber once in a fortnight or so, when he had to ask me for a large sum of money, or to go to the mosque. About seven months passed this way, when one day my master’s father and friends paid the family a visit. It was this day I learnt that Meer Bakhtáwar expected a son and heir. Great were the rejoicings on this occasion. One day the anxiously-expected heir came to gladden the hearts of the parents

* Manager.

and, as it seems to me now, to darken their hitherto brilliant course of life. The demands for money became more frequent. I met every demand with a smile. Sometimes I had myself to go out with money for the purchase of some nick-nack for the mother or the child. At such times I was not slow to use discretion, you may be sure. I had not seen the Meer's beautiful wife up to now, though it was over two years; but the baby was now and then brought out to peep at the outside world. It was the most lovely child I have ever seen. They said the mother was growing lovelier every day. They talked of her as *The Angel*. This was her favourite name. I tried many means of obtaining a glimpse of her divine beauty, but it was not to be for years to come.

“ My position in the household improved with the progress of time. The master had implicit faith in me, and I rewarded him by improving my opportunities. Not a rupee passed from my hands out of which I did not withhold a fraction for my own pockets. Not a piece of cloth, not an ornament, not a single article of luxury crossed the threshold, of which part was not diverted to my house. Poor men must live, and, if possible, I had determined

not only to live, but to live to the best purpose, as I could see as early as now that my master was running out of his fortune very fast. But it was not my business to advise or warn him till the worst came. This way we lived for seven years. I had already to tell my master that we had no cash left. We had to part with some ornaments, and were living upon the rents of a few shops which we had to mortgage. One of these shops was mortgaged to myself unknown to the Meer—it stood in my uncle's name. About this time I myself married. I need not say that my master and mistress paid the expenses—about Rs. 3,000—of my marriage. They parted with their ornaments—these people seem to me to part with things as cheerfully as when they buy them to help me. They thought very highly of my honesty and diligence; they also knew that I was very useful in 'raising the wind' and disposing of superfluities. For the Rs. 1,000 my master had to borrow I would bring him 700, part of the rest being considered interest already deducted, the remaining part going to me. At home, too, not a single day passed when I did not earn something more than the stipulated pay. I had my black-mail upon

everything bought or sold, borrowed or mortgaged.

“One day the master’s son would come behind and ride on my back. In so doing he would do damage to my coat. Well, this coat I would show to the parents, who, to encourage the boy to learn a little of fun and freedom, as they explained, would on no account scold him. But when I cried and said I was a poor man and had a family—I had become quite free with my master—they would laugh at my plight, and present me with a piece of longcloth, saying, by way of apology, that they would give away a thousand pieces of cloth rather than that their darling be checked in the free exercise of his faculties! Another day the little urchin would empty the contents of an ink-bottle on my turban, and straight way would I go to the drawing-room, dripping with the liquid. The delighted father would clap his hands and describe my misery to the wife inside, who would laughingly order me to buy another turban! Well, I was nothing loth. Many a time since have I invited the boy to play me some such trick, and right handsomely have I got the parents to pay for it!

“But now Meer Bakhtáwar was about

Rs. 15,000 in debt. There was scarcely anything left to pledge or to sell. I prevailed upon him, therefore, to curtail his expenses. This he did. It was a trial to him not to be able to afford to his wife and child those thousand and one little luxuries they had enjoyed so long. But the wife was perfectly contented with his love and devotion. The boy was too young to notice the difference in their circumstances. But even now our monthly expenses were Rs. 200, my own pay Rs. 40, and we had no visible source of income. I was therefore told to dispose of such things as I could. This I did, carrying most of them to my house, and paying what price I liked. There were some splendidly mounted swords and daggers, some exquisite paintings, some rare and magnificently illuminated Persian manuscripts, which I thus transferred to my house. My mistress took her misfortune much to heart ; but her husband was of good cheer. He knew that his father would not last long, and that he would be sure to leave him something. But the old man did not die. To add to the misery of suspense the son and heir fell sick. The parents' anxiety was terrible. Night and day the Mahomedan doctor remained by the side of the little sufferer, and night and day prayed the priest for

his recovery. The parents hovered over the child in agonised suspense. The mother gave me her last ring, her husband's wedding gift, to sell. But no earthly power could save the child—he sickened and died. The father's life seemed to go out with the son's. The mother suffered, too, but she had something still left to cherish in the life. A servant now came to ask for money; I had none to give. My master was too much prostrated to think of such things. In this her cruel extremity the mistress came to the door of the room (outside which we servants were assembled). She asked to see me. This was the first time I saw her. She was in her 'sleeping dress'; her beauty of person was truly divine, and recent suffering had hallowed it with that dignified composure before which the most supercilious could not help bending his head. I bowed to her, trembling from a hundred little agitations of the heart. She swept a haughty glance over me, and asked if I could not bring money. I pleaded inability, but promised I would try. Then she whispered, 'See, Nyálchand, you must save your master's honour, so don't go to his father's house. But give my boy a decent burial; have you nothing, *nothing* left to sell?' She shut the door before receiv-

ing my reply, and I went out for money. I could spare none, nor borrow any; the only chance was with the old Meer. I went to him with the news of his grandson's death. He was himself sick unto death, but without asking any question he ordered Rs. 100 to be given me.

"In two weeks more the old Meer died, leaving property to the extent of about Rs. 20,000 to his unhappy son. My master never recovered from his melancholy. I was given power to dispose of the property just inherited. I realised the value, paid off all standing debts, most of them in my favour, and put about Rs. 4,000 in my master's hands. I further undertook to appeal to the Government on his behalf, but nothing seemed to rouse him. Friends advised my mistress to dispense with her establishment, and to live within her income, but she would not listen to it so long as her 'lord' lived. She accepted my resignation, agreeing that I should improve my prospects after so much suffering in their service! I assured her of my lifelong devotion, and my daily prayers for the well-being of herself and her husband. Being a woman of singular abilities and resource, she wrote to the

Governor's wife, in Persian, telling that lady of her misfortunes and of the claims of her family. Her touching story moved the officials who heard of it. The case was not worth looking into, but Government sanctioned an annual grant of Rs. 500 to the Meer for his lifetime. He seems to have entirely forgotten the past. He scarcely recognises me. I am now a rich and highly-respected merchant—so high up in the world that I cannot visit my master any longer. My lady is said to have grown grey-haired; but neither premature age nor her past sufferings, the gloomy present nor the blank future, can lessen her devotion to her husband. She seems to live for and in him. She is his sole attendant—the servants attend to minor duties. She is charitable even now, and on every *Ja'má* (Friday) she gives what she can to the needy and suffering. I do not feel quite satisfied with myself when reviewing the past, but then, you see, *a poor man must live.*"

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P A R S I S .

GUJARAT was long the head-quarters of the Parsis, especially so Surat and the adjoining towns; and even now it boasts of some very good families. But the Parsis of Surat have fallen upon evil days. The Shettia class, that is, the aristocracy, seem to have become lazy, listless and gregarious, working for generations in one and the same groove. They do not understand true patriotism, and though charity is the very basis of their grand old faith, they have very hazy ideas of that greatest of divine graces. Their notion of charity is the giving away of alms, the distribution of money—their own and anybody else's—to the deserving or undeserving, with some object, often that of earning popularity or official favour. That comprehensive virtue, which inculcates a spirit of justice, generosity and total forgiveness, they often seem to lack the faculty to appreciate. They know not, many of them, the true nature of charity. No doubt our Shetts are loyal to the British Crown; but to what ruling power have they ever been disloyal? Loyalty is their policy, their interest. But after all, the Parsi Shett of Surat is an honest, peace-loving citizen. He seldom beats his wife, and

is otherwise a moral old gentleman, with a few "old-gentlemanly vices," and many old-gentlemanly virtues. The middle class Parsis of the mofussil are a hardy, industrious race, both males and females. But for want of capital and suitable employment a number of families emigrate to Bombay every year. I doubt if this change does them much good. Already Bombay holds more Parsi families than it can maintain in comfort.

There are Parsi Shetts in Bombay, too, much better, as a rule, than those at Surat. They hold higher views of life, so to say, but all that does not save them from priestly influence. Five to twelve Parsi Shetts compose what is called a *Puncháyet*.

SHET SUKABHOY SEKTAJI

is a prim old individual, well shaven, well washed, and well scented. This faultlessly white-washed being walks as if he were a basket of newly-laid eggs. He seems to be in dread of progress, of the very motion of life. Sloth is his ideal of the fashionable. His limbs move very cautiously and very slowly. He hates action of any kind. He hugs indolence, rejoices in its embrace, and revels in its seductive

bosom. When, once in six months, he is required to attend to a little public business, he helplessly turns to his steward and asks, broken-hearted, "Oh ! what's to do again ?"—as if only an hour ago he had done some tremendous deed of heroism for his country ! Shett Sektaji sits down with a grimace and stands up with a yawn. He is sensitively nervous about his health. He will not get out of his carriage till a few minutes after it has stopped ; this is to avoid any internal agitation which might follow a hasty descent. He cannot go to sleep without a stout cotton pillow tied under his chest. In public our Shett is known to be a very worthy citizen, and a thoroughly loyal subject of the Crown. But he has no strength, no stamina. He can look no man in the face.

THE PARSI A HEBREW JEW !

There would seem to be pretty good ground for Dr. Wilson's startling theory that the Parsis are one of the lost Ten Tribes. There are many striking points of similarity, many common weaknesses and common virtues between Hebrews and Parsis. The difference between them to-day seems to be that Parsi life is much less intense, that is, less patriotic. A Parsi may thus be styled a Hebrew with

the weaknesses of the lower class of Hindus. For this deterioration he has to thank climate, and perhaps marriage with Hindu women.

OUR FORLORN HOPES.

It is in the middle ranks of life that we can perceive materials for "a mighty, puissant nation." If this middle class goes on educating itself, it may one day realise the future which has been predicted for it by the ancient seers. Besides keeping abreast of the rapid advance of arts and sciences, the people have to learn patriotism and to abjure priestcraft. Above all, they have to create or organise a new national church, founded on the simple tradition of *good thought, good word, good deed*, bequeathed by Zoroaster. Let them weed their scriptures of their verbiage, and let them defy the threats of the levites. Let them see that neither greatness nor happiness is to be achieved by a compromise with conscience. But for true national greatness, sincerity in all we do, and some rational scheme of life, are essential. Unfortunately for him, the Parsi is becoming either insincere or irrational.

THE ORTHODOX PARSI AT PRAYER.

In the most solemn concern of life, at his prayers and devotions, the orthodox Parsi

sometimes makes a droll figure. I am not speaking of every orthodox Parsi in Bombay, but of *my* orthodox Parsi. To him prayer is as necessary as food, and the time for it recurs oftener than the time for his meals. The minute he is out of bed the orthodox Parsi shakes himself free of all idle reveries, the remnants of the night's dreaming; and unfolding the triple cord* round his waist, turns his face to where the sun has just risen, and giving the sacred badge three vigorous flaps, he cries out in choice Persian, "Defeat, defeat to Shaitán,"† so that the author of evil may not venture, later on, to molest the pious man on his path of duty. Shortly after he takes his bath, and then commences the regular prayer business. He has his prayer-book in Zend text and Gujarāti character, out of which he recites an appropriate prayer or two either before the kitchen fire, before the blazing censer in the drawing-room, before the sacred fire of the neighbouring temple, and even in one of the central fire-temples—this according to his circumstances or the degree of devotion he possesses. At other times he prays before the sun, the moon, the stars, the well, the river, the sea, the plant, the tree, the mountain. He

* The *Kusti*.

† Satan.

sees nothing wrong in some of these improvised keblás,* and I do not see what right I have to make him see otherwise. My business is with the quantity of his devotions. These are five in form, according to five natural divisions of his day. In quality these devotions are good and healthy, but they are hopelessly "mixed." Very often there is a long piece for quiet reading and meditation, which the pious Zoroastrian draws out line by line with well-executed ejaculations and the approved nasal twang, but without the vaguest notion of what he is doing. This is a sorry sight, and to the younger generation it may well appear a farce. An educated person, with power to discriminate between right and wrong, cannot help repudiating idle formularies which, for him, consist in mere mumbling over an extent of jaw-breaking jargon. And yet there are sensible men in the community who cannot understand why so much passive indifference, a feeling perhaps more dangerous than open infidelity, which in itself is ominous enough, should prevail in the Zoroastrian world. The reasons are obvious. There is very little element of genuine devotion in the formula as at present gone through

* Mediums or natural objects facing which the Orientals offer prayers to the Almighty.

There is no intelligent appreciation of the recitals. The priest says his prayers for hire. He mumbles a quantity of recitations without indicating any real appreciation. There is no solemnity, no dignity, often no decency in the performance of the hireling priest. He knows it all to be humbug, and he gets through it as fast as he can, to see if he can give the benefit of his services to another credulous client soon after. And the devout layman? How does he offer prayers? He recites chapter after chapter of matter which he ought to read once in a way, which contains some excellent moral or philosophical dissertation, but which has as little of devotional merit as *Gulliver's Travels*! He does not understand a word of what he recites, and therefore he does so necessarily without any intelligent appreciation. He wastes from six to eight hours of his day under a mistaken sense of duty. What he wants is to thank his Creator for his mercies, and to beg of Him to continue these. Not knowing how to do it in language he can understand, he wades through his volume of bewildering phraseology containing learned discourses on matters astronomical, geological, metaphysical, moral, and social! Morning and evening he is haunted by visions of duty, and

however oppressed at the prospect of the distasteful task before him, he gets through it with the patience of a martyr. But the attention, which is never wholly absorbed by such work, is apt to be disturbed and distracted. Hence it is not unfrequent to see the orthodox Parsi at prayer breaking out into abuse of his neighbour, into snatches of conversation or observation, and many other acts besides, which have nothing at all to do with the solemn affair in hand. The Zend prayer is always wound up with a personal supplication in Gujaráti. The devout gentleman is considerably relieved when he comes to this part of his edifying business. Here he at last understands what he says. And what does he say? Why, he thanks, in a sort of way, and as fast as he can, his Creator for his past favours; and then he asks for future blessings. True to his instincts, he has an eye to business, even in this solemn obligation of life. He prays, not because it is his duty to do so, but because a prayer opens the way for a request! So he thinks, and so he acts. Who has not seen the orthodox Parsi, of a morning or evening, at the sea-shore? With what arts, what blandishments, he tries to seduce the Will Divine! How he bows, how he bends, how he kneels,

how he promises and coaxes, threatens and bullies Heaven ! How he scratches his nose in repentance, and holds up his skirt-corner in hope of receiving instantly the good things of life he prays for ! But what decent man will not be shocked at this senseless travesty ? If devotional services are a necessary institution for the people, let them be so ; but why this public exhibition which exposes the community to the ridicule of all others ? What presumption that a man should ask the Déity to think of *him*, and HIM exclusively ! This presumption becomes unpardonable when the suppliant descends to details such as asking God to get him good interest for his money, to provide his son with a suitable berth and his daughter with an eligible husband ! God is asked to be a match-maker and a broker ; he is requested to be engrossed with the suppliant's affairs altogether, as if the Creator and Upholder of this vast and magnificent universe had nothing better to do than to devote His time to the affairs of an infinitesimal and insignificant worm like man ! The fact is, the average orthodox Parsi has mistaken the scope and spirit of genuine devotion till he has drifted into a callous, selfish, presumptuous creature, unworthy of the name of Zoroastrian.

And this is entirely owing to the mystery in which a crafty priesthood has hitherto shrouded his scriptures.

THE REFORMED PARSI OF THE PERIOD.

As for the young or, as he is called, the reformed Parsi, I doubt if he is essentially a Zoroastrian ; he seems to scorn everything that requires self-denial. It is often good to be independent, and I would not mind it so much if the Parsi youth tried to live independently of any particular creed, and at the same time to be an honest, useful man, desirous of leaving the world the better for his having lived in it. But it is not so with the average young Parsi. How could it be, poor fellow, whilst he is in the transition period of his national existence, wavering and undecided at every stage of thought and of action ? One melancholy phase of Parsi life, or for that matter the life of young Bombay or young India, is the almost certain deterioration that comes over a public man after he is forty or fifty. I have observed many cases of vigorous manhood declining in the way stated above. Whether it be the fault of nature or of climate, it is a serious blemish in the national character. Let us hope the younger generation may furnish a better example of citizenship. But to return

to the reformed Parsi of the period. He is generally a sturdy sensible fellow, a trifle too selfish and indolent. I think he wants rousing. I need not look too closely into his faith. Religion is a matter of convenience in some cases, in many cases a matter of complete indifference. I once saw a Parsi Graduate of the University, a man of mathematics, flattening his nose against the Agiary* window and making sly overtures to Heaven. But being an educated man, he perhaps did not like his friends to catch him at prayer. To my misfortune I caught him in the act, and having known him a little, suggested that if Heaven is to be propitiated with prayers, these need not be offered as a secret bribe, as stolen or contraband goods. My friend cheerfully agreed with me at the time ; but I suspect he has since denounced me on my back as an atheist ! This inconsistency is the curse of native society. Hindus and Parsis preach all kinds of reforms glibly enough, but when it comes to practising, they often retire into narrow and arrogant orthodoxy. We all admire Karsandas Mulji ; how few of us will act and suffer as he did ? Yes, it is easy enough to play the philanthropist in theory ; but when it comes to hard practice, it is another

* Fire temple.

matter altogether. Many of my readers, I dare say, know the Hindu reformer and patriot, Pandit Bhuttachore (Sanskrit Bhattacharya). See how eagerly he mounts the platform, howls and shrieks and throws up his arms and casts his eyes Heavenwards as he denounces idolatry and advocates the worship of 'The One True God !' See him gushing at private and public gatherings, shedding an ocean of tears as he describes the miseries of early marriage and lifelong widowhood. Missionary ladies and gentlemen call him 'almost a Christian'; the Rev. Dr. Wilson used to pray with Bhuttachore for the good of his people. And yet, what does our Pandit do *at home* ? They say he shuts himself up in his *kholi* morning and evening, arranges his dirty little metal gods and goddesses on the floor, squats before them, offers them prayers and incense, and dances the circular dance around them ! When his daughter or daughter-in-law becomes a widow, Shri Bhuttachore coops her up in that dreary cage of a kitchen room, with a squalid mattress and mouldy food, her head shaven and her delicate person shrouded in the dirtiest and darkest winding sheet ! Think of this hoary hypocrite, and tell me if you are not tempted to throttle him ? Would it be a sin if some one were to sew him up in a gunny-bag,

and throw him into the sea? Bhuttachore may have a right to worship stones or dead rats. He may keep his family in the cowyard (if the Health Officer allows it). But, then, why should he seem other than he is?

And look at that Parsi reformer, Mr. Ograji. See how he bows his way up the crowded platform, with his wife and family by his side. See how blandly he explains to them the meaning of difficult terms when they can't follow the lecturer. And yet, his opposite neighbour will tell you that Ograji calls his wife the most frightful names, and threatens her with divorce every time his egg is underdone or his brandy not well iced! He pulls his daughter by the hair if his shoes have not the requisite shine after blacking, or if there is a speck of dirt on his velvet coat when Ograji goes to the garden! Now where is the harm if you twist that hog's neck of his or pull him by his red volcanic nose? But you can't do it, my friend; Society will resent your violence, because Society loves its mountebank and macaroni.

The Parsi youth's infidelity is partly due to the Dustoors—the priestly class. The Dustoor is an hereditary functionary, and he thinks it his interest to keep the people struggling in

ignorance and superstition. In so doing the Dustoor, unconsciously perhaps to himself, remains ignorant and superstitious.

THE DUSTOOR AT HIS WORST.

[HIS ORIGIN ; RISE ; DECLINE ; HIS FALL UNFATHOMABLE ; HIS WAYS OF LIFE ; HIS SYMPATHIES, ANTIPATHIES AND MISERIES.]

The Dustoor may be described as an *ignis fatuus* of the dark ages of religion. Historians of free-thought consider him a myth, whilst the faithful claim for him a direct descent from the Magi* of old. If magi is Greek for maggots, then there is much sense in the latter interpretation, as the Dustoor's creed is, above all, very maggoty. But these interpretations do not at all settle the question of origin. There is much doubt about the primary meaning of the compound or hybrid Dustoor. Some say it is a good Persian word meaning "pious leader" (*vide* Persian dictionary); others assert that Dusthoor, which is the correct rendering, means literally "the hand of Hoor." Max Müller lets off the Dustoor with the gentle hint that he originally came from Chinese Tartary. But M. M. is a wag. Probably the most correct in-

* The wise men of Iran and Parthia.

terpretation is that furnished by the broad and eclectic *Bombay Review*. That worthy reviewer has ascertained, by light of recent researches in Persia, that Dustoor is the father of that disastrous system of *Dustoori** which is eating up the Municipality, the Commissariat, and some other Departments of of State. This is a hit. It shows how many others, besides the priest-ridden Parsis, are writhing in the grip of the Dustoor. The Municipal Commissioner, the Commissary General, the Railway Agent, the Viceroy, the Secretary of State, all, all are under the baneful influence of this father of *Dustoori*. Worse still, the Ráo Sáheb Vishwanáth Náráyan Mandlik,† in his great work on Hindu Law, openly says that Dustoor means Custom. Cruel custom has been the ruin of India's social life, and Ráo Sáheb Vishwanáth Náráyan Mandlik, C.S.I., F.R.A.S., conclusively proves that the Dustoor is Custom itself! Truth is stranger than fiction.

When the wave-worn exiles of Iran‡ first stood in the kindly presence of Ráná Jádava of Gujarát, there was no such thing as a particu-

* Petty but systematic bribery.

† A scholar, jurist, and prominent citizen of Bombay.

‡ Ancient Persia.

lar Dustoor among them. Up to recently the Dustoor had a shadowy existence. But it waxed into such fierce light by degrees, that the Dustoor made it too hot for any sensible person to stand in his shadow. Then, by the law of action and reaction, as philosophers write, there grew up a new power in Parsidom—the PUNCHÁYET. Then came a sudden change, a sort of depression over the spirit of the Dustoor's dream. In its turn the PUNCHÁYET, too, has become a thing of the past, making room for another social regenerator, the RÁHNUMÁI. But this Mai,* too, is getting too old-motherly, and may have to defer to the pressing demands of the younger generation to have truth, *the whole truth, nothing but the truth.*

Even in his declining glory a Dustoor is not a personage to be despised. Far from it. He lives in better style than ever did old Friar Tuck. In eating and drinking he is thoroughly GARAGANTUAN. He has all the animal spirits of a RABELAIS without much of his finely-concealed spirituality. They say a Dustoor never speaks while eating. Why should he, when what he eats is enough to make a feast for the gods?

* Mother.

A Dustoor can put on looks of portentous learning, but inside his head all is a Dead Sea, a Desert of Sahara. The most noticeable feature of his dress are the muslin petticoat* and the cauliflower pugri.†

A Dustoor will never eat or drink with the Hindu or Mussalman, though he may take a cup of tea or a glass of ice-cream with a European official. He hates the Hindu or Mussalman, whose shadow is so polluting that the Dustoor has to wash himself with cow urine and water for having crossed such shadow under certain circumstances.

The Dustoor Sáheb is very pious, and prays day and night for any one who will pay him. He is chief mourner at a funeral, and gets handsomely paid. He is chief actor at wedding and other social parties, and is more handsomely paid. He is a good hand at match-making and match-breaking, and is most handsomely paid. These are his doors of income, or his "windows of income," as he modestly and sorrowfully puts it.

To the widow in affliction—that is, with a large property and no heirs—a Dustoor's soul

* His robe is very much like a huge female garment.

† Turban.

goes forth with resistless ardour. Well endowed young widows are wild creatures; but between the Dustoor, the doctor, and the lawyer, they are soon tamed into lambs.

The Dustoor has a tendency to poking his nose in everybody's concerns; and every honest man hates your prying, paltering, button-holing busy-boy. In this respect the Government is a long suffering victim of his persecutions. He follows the Governor with odes, elegies, charms, and benedictions, and overhangs the august presence till the thing is "accepted with thanks." This note of acknowledgment the Dustoor may frame in a looking-glass or a mirror. It is said that Sir Philip Wodehouse,* who had a horror of the Dustoor, actually contemplated an anti-Dustoori Act; but Mr. Gibbs,† who had a tear for every sinner, interposed, and said a J.P.-ship‡ would do as well. I am not quite sure if the Dustoor is yet branded with those letters of fire; but sooner or later he is sure to be a J.P. That is his *krishmet*.§ Poor man! They have made him

* Governor of Bombay in 1875.

† Now Member of the Supreme Council of India.

‡ Justice of the Peace—an honorary office in Bombay.

§ Fate.

a Fellow* already, with the black robe of the Puttáválá.†

THE PARSI PRIESTHOOD.

It is impossible to write of the Parsi priest without reverence for his past. In his palmy days the Mobed wielded an influence over State and Society, next to that of the King. And in many cases, as may well be believed, even the functions of royalty were subordinated by common consent to the supreme importance attaching to the Dustoor's sacred office. In Iran the Mobed-Dustoor was all in all. He was arbiter and ambassador between nations, he declared war and proclaimed peace, he directed research and investigation in the field of science, he patronised art, he adorned the professions of medicine and law. In short, the priestly class monopolised almost all superior powers, and what is more, made a righteous use of their opportunities. In Iran the priest was a prophet as well as a law-giver. He saw deep into the soul of things spiritual, and effected cures and worked miracles which it is next to impossible in these days of materialism to realise. Why

* Fellow of the University.

† A belted messenger.

and by what process modern priesthood has degenerated it would be tedious to describe. The Dustoor in India was a beneficent power even in Akbar's time. Those who have read of Meherji Rana need not take the account for a mere rhapsody. There are Mobeds and Dustoors even to-day whose dignified presence awakens interest, and whose readings and recitations thrill the hearts of the audience. But these are exceptions. Neglect, want of faith and mutual jealousy have brought Parsi priesthood of the day into contempt with all sensible men. And nothing can reclaim our priests from this deplorable state so well as acknowledgment of their sacred office and insistence on their devoting themselves to the life to which they have been called. At present the majority of the class are anything but what they ought to be. And those who are so ignoble in life and conversation are quite the reverse of being religious guides. Actuated by the love of money, the priest will not shrink from any means whereby he can strengthen his social position. He will be a petty contractor, printer, coachman, toddy-drawer; he will wait upon ladies and play the buffoon after he has cooked their dainty dishes—and all this while our Mobed claims the privilege of exercising his sacred

functions ! Altogether, the position of our priests, even as levites, is grievously low. It rests with the Parsis, as a patriotic people, to remove this long-standing reproach. They must extend the existing facilities for the education of the class. The clergy must have a liberal education, and after that they must be asked to behave themselves. I do not know why the office of High Priest is hereditary among us, and why it could not be made elective in some sense. Why may not the requisite education qualify a layman to be a priest ? Be the reason what it may, this much is certain, that the Parsi community has no reason to be proud of its priesthood. I well remember reading Professor Monier Williams' article on Zoroastrianism some years ago in the *Nineteenth Century*. There was not a Dustoor, not a Mobed to attempt a defence of his faith. It is presumptuous of me, besides being too late in the day, to join issue with the learned Bodleian Professor. But a few words may not be amiss from a student who is far from being a servile Zoroastrian, and who, disclaiming complete sympathy with the efforts of impatient and arrogant "reform," yet deploras the deadening indifference that appears to have settled upon his people as to their spiritual well-being.

It may be taken for granted that what now passes as Zoroastrianism cannot be all ascribed to the great Apostle of Truth. His teachings are a good deal mixed up with the sophistries of his predecessors and successors. This fact ought to be always present to the religious critic, that many material phases of Zoroastrianism, such as it is, are involved in uncertainty. It is quite possible that by the light of advancing philology, and with the help of impartial commentators, like Professor Williams himself, and of sympathetic and ardent truth-seekers like Professor Darmesteter, the faith of Zoroaster, such as it once was, may be better understood half a century hence. That some such happy future awaits it must be admitted by all who have studied the Avesta and followed its history for the last half century or so in all its vicissitudes. A Christian scholar is quite welcome to the consolations of Christianity. But he may allow that Christianity has had advantage over the older faiths in point of time. Zoroastrianism proper is not to be despised by the Christian critic simply because it reveals phases of life and thought not understood, or rather misunderstood, by him. It may be no way inferior to Christianity in spiritual grace and dignity. As for the blessing of Salvation

ready made to hand, there has existed, and will always exist, a difference of opinion regarding its necessity. To some minds nothing is more degrading than to shift upon another the burden of his own sins. That too much faith in the redeeming power of the common Saviour of all may lead to utter listlessness in matters of the gravest spiritual importance is a contingency which no partisan can ignore. Many there are in the world who would prefer to work out their own salvation. But this is not my object in briefly referring to Sir M. Williams' paper at present. What I propose to him and those similarly minded is, that the mission of Zoroaster as *the* reformer of the earlier creeds, and as *the* Prophet of Organization, should not be undervalued by comparison with later competitors who have lived and worked under infinitely more favourable circumstances, and who can, in so far alone, if at all, be said to be his superiors.

ARE THE PARSIS DETERIORATING ?

Dr. Weir's Census Report for Bombay once more raises the old question as to the numerical strength of the Parsis and their material condition as a race. There are, as usual, two sides to

the question. As usual, again, I do not lean too much to either, and can say my say as an independent observer. Prof. Max Müller of Oxford University once expressed the fear that under existing restrictions the Parsi race might some day become extinct. Dr. Weir of Bombay Municipality shows by figures taken on the spot that, at least so far as their island home goes, the heirs of Rustom and Zal are not at all likely to die out. That they live and multiply like—well, comparisons are odious. Here we have two learned specialists at loggerheads. And it is not for a lay man to decide when doctors disagree. But there is no harm in skimming over the subject—is there? So, with your leave, my man of facts and figures,—on whose authority do you quote your returns? Can you swear that your figures are infallible? Can you prove them to be so? When the manufacturer general of census returns told us some years ago that the number of Parsis at Bombay was ever-increasing, I gave him up for a theorist. The same may or may not be my opinion of Dr. Weir's little return. Now, I have a real regard for officials generally. They are able and conscientious workers, and are up to every kind of work, from drawing up annual reports to reviewing these same in friendly journals. Honestly, I have not such a

poor opinion of officials as many of my educated countrymen have. What I object to is the oracular tone of official reports, the sacred character of their contents, the claim the reporters set up to infallibility, and above all, their boast about EXPERIENCE. When a Sir Oracle of the District dogmatises on his "direct experience," he may well be asked what he means by that favourite phrase of his. How does the Collector acquire his "experience" of things not under his own observation? Who are his informants? The Head Clerk, whose duty is to tell him, not what is true, or what the Government and the people would profit by knowing, but often what the Sáheb Bahádúr would be *pleased to be told*. Many a Head Clerk's motto is—"Master's *please*." The Collector's other informants, or informers rather, are the Village Patel, the Jemadar, the Chuprasi, and, in some cases, the Aya. When a young Collector reads this, he is sure to call me names and charge me with exaggeration. I beg to anticipate His Honor and to assure His Worship that this ten-line comment of mine is no more exaggerated than three-fourths of official reports from the districts. And for this evil the system is more to blame than the men who work under it. The Deputies, the Sub-Judges, the Mamlatdars, the

Karkuns, at times, go upon hearsay more or less, and they base their reports on what they know or feel will put "Master" in good humour. Of course, there are many Collectors who will insist upon the truth and require ocular proofs, to be convinced. But there may be Collectors, too, who now and then make their subordinates report what is the reverse of truth.

But let us accept Dr. Weir's return as correct, as I believe it is. What then? Why do some of the Parsi writers make such a cackle over it? If the Parsis have had a tendency to increase in Bombay, has it been ascertained how many families annually come over here from the Mofussil? Bombay has long been the centre of attraction for Parsis; few go beyond Bombay, fewer still out of the country. Granted that births outnumber deaths. After all, what a miserably small proportion the Parsis are of the Hindu population of India, of the Mahomedan population of the world? The fact is, Parsis should never dream of rivalling other nations by number—their only chance is to shine by the superiority of heart and of intellect. The position they have hitherto enjoyed is due to their cosmopolitan charity and love of progress; and these spring more or less from material prosperity.

The Parsis of Bombay were its most prosperous citizens; but they have gone down as a community since the days of the Share Mania, and other communities have risen in proportion. Since 1865-66 their material progress seems to have been imperceptible. Bombay owes a great deal to the Parsis. In a sense it once belonged to Parsis. From Malabar Hill down to Colaba, from Mazagon to the Fort, houses and lands were almost exclusively with Parsis. Parsis had a monopoly of the trade of Bombay—from Dubash and Interpreter the Parsi rose to be Broker, Agent and *factotum*, in the end setting up a firm of his own. The Banajis, the Dadys, the Readymoneys, the Petits, the Patels, the Wadias, the Camas, and others, made money with amazing rapidity. And as they earned, so they spent. Besides their public benefactions, what the private charity of Parsis has done for Bombay will perhaps never be adequately known. Later on came Jamsetjee Jejeebhoy, not only a merchant prince and a philanthropist, but a seer, as some of his charities now show. Marvellous were his pluck and enterprise; his strokes of business took away the breath of cautious competitors. And nobly he made use of his earnings! In less than twenty years that man gave

away over thirty lakhs of rupees. And how well bestowed most of the money was! Sir Jamsetjee's charities were truly catholic. But in the more essential matters he did not forget his own people. Had the first Baronet lived ten years longer he might have given us a Parsi Hospital, a Parsi College, and perhaps a Parsi Colony too. His son, Mr. Rustomjee Jamsetjee, would have filled his place but for the crash of 1865. Sir Cowasji Jehangir would have done something very like it but for his infirmity, though even from his sick bed he could bully a hundred so-called merchants into action. All this now reads like a chapter from ancient history. I fear the Parsis are drifting on many sides into difficulties; they are being squeezed out, so to say. What they want is a leader who could collect the scattered forces and lead them into useful channels. Who could accomplish this work better than the Parsi Punchayet? Our wealthy families must come forward—the Petits, the Sethnas and others—to bring about the development of small trades, industries and handicrafts, and to encourage emigration to a small extent. We want a public fund, for which the Parsis are certainly not too poor. Our young men, instead of being huddled together like widows in a Hindu zenana,

must resume old lines of work long neglected, strike out new paths, and be content with small but rapid profits. Look at the patient Bora, Bhattia, Bania, Memon. You will find few Parsis in trade outside of Bombay. They are all for Government service, hotels or liquor-shops.

We Parsis boast too much of our female education. In the presence of Asiatic jealousy this education has not given much of real freedom to our women. An educated doll may be good enough to look at. But there ends her usefulness. All our female education has not yet produced one lady doctor, or sister of mercy, or zenana teacher. Apart from this public point of view, the educated young lady at home is often felt to be a costly encumbrance. As in England, so here, the young man of the period is becoming a sordid utilitarian, and he looks upon a wife as a doubtful investment. You selfish idiot, why don't you make your wife what you wish her to be? Why don't you tell her that her duty is to be a true helpmate, that in fact she must contribute her share to the common stock of happiness, over and above presenting her wretched husband with his duplicate every year or two? She must cook and

wash and sew and stitch, keep shop for her husband and mind his business otherwise, just as the European, Hindu, Mahomedan, or any other sensible wife in the world will do, such as even the Irani Parsi wife does to-day in Bombay. All this sickness in the family and the doctor's bills, the breakage and wastage and bickering, the insolvency and the alimony, and the Lord and the lawyers alone know what else, come of idleness at home. With a hundred rupees a month for your income, how can you afford a wet nurse and a dry nurse, a cook and a hamal? Your children's mother is the cheapest nurse for them and the best cook. And you could make a tolerable hamal, if you gave up that club of yours with its stale dinner and stinking gossip.

Every community has its poor—those who *will* be poor, do what you like for them. To their credit be it said that Parsis do their best for their destitute co-religionists. But organized charity is still wanting. We must have a number of millinery and other shops, where respectable girls may learn their business and thus to maintain their families. We must have flower shows and fancy work exhibitions on holidays for the benefit of the poor. Well-

to-do young ladies and gentlemen ought to contribute their time and money for these objects. When you are besieged, of an evening, near Vithal Wadi or the Market, by boys and girls, with hollow eyes and hungry looks, offering to sell skull-caps and neckties prepared by the busy old mother or the bed-ridden sister—or by the old man who has once seen better days—holding up the woollen socks, prepared “at home” as he tells you with timid confidence—what does it all mean? Why, it means pinching poverty, want of the daily dole. When you see such sights, of a cold dark evening, does not your heart yearn to pay the little waifs ten times the cost of their skull-caps and neckties, and are you not tempted to empty the contents of your purse into the withered trembling hands? But how long will casual help last where there are six bread-eaters and not one bread-winner? Truly are the Parsis fallen upon evil days—a people whose life excited the admiration of the wisest of Oriental Kings at whose feet* I now jot down these passing thoughts,—a people on the basis of whose ancient faith Akbar tried to build up a universal religion—seem to be running adrift as a nation—a small band of aliens not unlikely,

* Akbar's tomb at Sekundra in Agra.

according to some thoughtful observers, to be exterminated in the keen cruel struggle that is before them, or to be absorbed into some stronger current in the ocean of humanity. Parsis love to do good. Will they not do good to their own race for *javedan* ?*

My poor people ! For near nine centuries after your flight from over Khorasan, on the wreck of a magnificent empire, you were at the mercy of the Hindus of Gujarát ; a quiet, in-offensive colony of men living on the sufferance of a cousin race. Like the Jews you outlived this long captivity in patience and infinite trust, helping and serving the Hindu rulers at the risk of life, till the fame of your chivalrous patriotism and of your spirit of enterprise reached the Grand Moghul. That was the turning point in the national career. You rose rapidly since then under the Mahomedans and the Portuguese. Then came the English, who raised you again into a nation. From 1750 to 1864-65 was a period of revival. In the monetary crash of 1865 you lost your fortune and with it part of your social prestige. You are being pressed out on both sides by the Hindu and the Mussulman. Lacking the thrift

* Eternity.

of the former and the combination of the latter, you may dwindle into a loose isolated atom in the mass of India's motley population. There is no hope for you unless you begin life again. Go into the districts and beyond the borders of the country, and turn over a new leaf. But you want guidance and support. These are the crying wants of the community. Parsis of the nineteenth century are like a flock without a shepherd. To begin with, we must have a National Fund, a National Council, and a National Church.

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THE BORAS OF GUJARÁT.

NEXT to the Parsis are the Borás (voharas—meaning literally, pedlars). They are Mahomedans and followers of Ali, but were originally Hindus. They are scattered over various parts of India, but generally gravitate towards Gujarát. The Borás have their Mohla, as the Parsis have their Dustoor and the Vaishnava-Hindus their Maháráj. All three people are about equally priest-ridden. As a typical Borá I have much pleasure in introducing my friend Adamji *bin** Didamji to the reader.

ADAMJI BIN DIDAMJI.

[HIS DESCENT, ATTRIBUTES, HABITS, MANNERS ; HIS LOVE OF MAN AND FEAR OF GOD, WITH MANY OTHER THINGS BESIDES.]

Adamji *bin* Didamji is a compound product, as his name implies. He is often found loafing about the outskirts of Gujarát ; but he is by no means a loafer. His forefathers were substantial Hindu farmers, somewhere between Kapadwanj and Viramgaum, what time the

* Born of, son of.

followers of the Prophet went from Ahmedabad lower down, with the sword in one hand and the Koran* in the other. As this is not a scientific paper, I shall proceed with a strictly personal history of Adamji, leaving further details of his origin to a learned chronicler. Suffice it to say, for the present purpose, that Adamji comes from remote Hindu ancestry. He resembles the Hindu of Gujarát more in features than any other people. In habits he is milder than the mildest Hindu. He dresses like the Hindu, except in the matter of the *payjama*† and the *pugri*, speaks the language of the province with a peculiar accent. Frugality and simplicity are the leading features of Adamji's character.

MY ADAMJI.

But to give a true picture of his character, it will be best to write of *my* Adamji *bin* Didamji. I made his acquaintance about eighteen years ago. He was then a flourishing young man of seventeen, and I was his junior by some years. Though I belonged to quite another race, Adamji took kindly to me from the very beginning. We met under pecu-

* The Mahomedan Bible.

† Drawers.

liar circumstances. We were both suffering from a bereavement, and our sympathy was therefore very warm for each other. Adamji often invited me to dinner. When these dinners were private affairs they were extremely frugal. A handful of parched rice was thrown over the sands in which we were sitting, and one by one the individual grains were picked up by us during intervals of discourse. Adamji was, as a rule, my moral preceptor, and his morality was of a very high order when we had to make shift with the parched grain aforesaid. He then talked of Heaven, and said the surest way to go thither was by conciliating the friendship of the Mullaji.* But it would be pleasanter to begin with marriage than death. One day Adamji brought home his bride from Kapadwanj—his “brand-new wife,” as Adamji told me in the pride of his heart. He gave us (me and other friends) a grand dinner on the occasion. A young buffalo formed the backbone of the banquet. Good Surat *ghee* and sweet Bengal sugar lurked in every nook and corner of the buffalo dish. *Kabobs* and *samosas*, *bhujias* and *hulwas*, roast and stew, sweet bread, and *pilao* and *berian*, formed the other concomitants of this wondrous feast. All of

* The Borá's high-priest.

us, about twenty mothers' sons, sat down to the repast, each one of the lot eating out of the same enormous dish. The blooming bride came at the end of the dinner to distribute flowers and *pán supari** to the guests assembled. It is the custom among Adamji's people that the bride, under the circumstances, *must* be ogled. This we did with extreme unction. We peeped into Mrs. A.'s pretty face, and ogled with outrageous freedom. She gave back defiant smile for smile, whilst the "happy" bridegroom hung down his head and looked rather foolish under this severe ordeal. But he soon after made up for his temporary humiliation by cold-shouldering us all and walking into his room with the bride and his and her aunts. It was about a week after this that I met Adamji again. I had also many occasions to see his Boo,† and though she always kept herself *purdanashin*,‡ Mrs. Adamji was not a bit of a prude. She chatted freely, and after the birth of little Adamji she did not hesitate to sit by the side of her husband's friends when he, the husband aforesaid, was near.

I had the melancholy satisfaction of seeing old Didamji, Adamji's father, die. He was

* Betel-leaf and nut.

† Borá or Mahomedan wife.

‡ Under the veil.

about sixty years old at the time. He had made his peace with Heaven. Didamji explained to his admiring friends that, though he had not lived an exemplary life, having been only a shopkeeper, still he hoped he had a happy hereafter. He had invited the Mulla for over a dozen times during his life-time, and had gone to His Holiness about a hundred times; and just before his death Didamji had paid a large sum of his ill-gotten gains to the holy intercessor, the Mulla, for a note of introduction on behalf of Didamji *to the address of the Angel Gabriel*. The note is supposed to have run somewhat on this wise:—"Dear Brother Gabriel,—My old friend Didamji *bin* Dosá it has been the pleasure of the all-wise *Allah** to call away. I have honoured Didamji with my friendship for many a long year, and knowing his worth, I beg of you to receive him hospitably, and to introduce him to the Most High with my respectful compliments." This note of introduction was buried with poor Didamji, and was no doubt taken by the deceased worthy, on the day of resurrection, to Gabriel. And there can be no sort of doubt that Brother Gabriel *did* bring Didamji to the

* God.

favourable notice of *Allah*, as Mrs. Adamji protested she had seen it all in a dream.


Adamji's life is a dead level of honesty, frugality, and simplicity—and so much the better for him. He is the thriftiest trader and shopkeeper in Gujarát. He begins life with selling matches, and generally ends with a substantial little establishment. In the beginning he can hardly earn one anna ($1\frac{1}{2}$ d.) a day; and yet you will find Adamji lives happily, and saves something besides. I know of Adamji's countrymen maintaining themselves and their families on two annas a day. But however heavy the expenses, the income is never altogether squandered.

Adamji is prudent by instinct, but never miserly. In ninety cases out of a hundred he makes a true friend. Though gifted with a keen sense of the power of money, he can make excellent use of it when he lists. Poverty has no sting for Adamji, nor riches an irresistible attraction. He is probably the shrewdest business-man of the town; but in other relations of citizenship his simplicity is truly charming. It is guilelessness pure and simple.

But in one thing Adamji *bin* Didamji differs very materially from every other Gujaráti—he has really no taste for politics. He is callous as to the political management of the country. He has infinite faith in the Government, next only in intensity to his faith in the Mulla. The strongest political agitation in his country fails to strike a responsive chord in his heart. He is a lover of peace. He will put himself to any amount of inconvenience, he will sacrifice anything, to secure peace. Peace to Adamji is a priceless blessing; and knowing that a discussion of political questions has a disturbing tendency, he will always refrain from politics. He neither hates nor loves politics; it is a question of stolid indifference.

Such is Adamji *bin* Didamji; and whoever comes to know him well will agree that Adamji is, taken all in all, an exemplary man in every respect. As a son and pupil, as a brother or father, as a friend, his life is a lesson to his neighbours. As a citizen he is invaluable—simple, sober, prudent, and eminently loyal. Long live my friend Adamji *bin* Didamji, a worthy exemplar to the “educated” jackanapes of the generation.

Latterly, it has been observed that town life is spoiling the race of Adamji. This is perhaps inevitable. I only hope Adamji may survive the process of civilization he is undergoing.



MASTER LALIA PARAPAR.

BESIDES Hindus, Parsis, Mahomedans, and Borás, there are numerous mixed and aboriginal tribes in Gujarát, such as Dhers, Mahárs, Bheels, and so on, of which I shall here introduce only one, the Láliás as we call them. The Láliás or Surtis profess to be Hindus, but are Hindu only in name. They are as pushing and mercurial as the Parsis, and are mostly in the domestic service of Europeans and Parsis. Surat and Nowsári are their head-quarters, but the more venturesome emigrate to Bombay every year, where they take kindly to no other calling except to be "boys" (menial servants) with European families. They pick up a smattering of English with the blustering habits of their masters. They are particularly in request among bachelor employers, under whom they work, play, drink, cozen, return home, grow fat, and die. Their women are generally fine, sturdy lasses, highly developed in muscle and bone, and "sound in wind and limb," as they say in disposing of a girl in marriage. The Láliáns are brisk, handy creatures for indoor or outdoor work. They make

masterful wives ; and it is, therefore, easy to account for many a droll Rip Van Winkle in Gujarát villages. Instances are on the records of the police court where an outraged wife has tried "to whip the offending Adam" out of her husband for indulging in heroic love. The Lálíáns themselves, however, are no votaries of Diana.

I have tried to collect a few Lálíá songs at the suggestion of a reviewer in the *Bombay Gazette*. But these village ditties, I find, turn upon very ticklish topics ; I dare not publish them in an English garb unless the reviewer aforesaid takes the responsibility. The fact is, our Lálíá Parápar is a creature of infinite love, loving everybody and everything as his wife's brother or sister—*máro háro* or *mári hári*. So tender is this feeling, and so comprehensive, that he will *máro háro* his father, brother, his European master, or even the village god he worships. Each of these he will call his wife's brother in the most easy familiar style. He has an ear for the love song ; but the fellow takes unpardonable liberties. The Lálíá loves discussion, too, but his tongue has a natural tendency to street-arabism. He will never make a Judge of the High Court. But with

all his faults Master Láliá Parápar is a jolly useful fellow, and honest after a fashion.

MIXED LOW CLASSES.

There is quite a legion of mixed low classes in Gujarát, lower than the Shudra class, which is the lowest of the four recognised Hindu Castes, and which includes, I suppose, carpenters, smiths and other artisans and handicraftsmen. These never intermarry nor eat together. Far below these Shudras are the Khárwás, Dublás, Pomplás, Máhárs, Bheels and others. The Khárwás are a hardy race and make excellent sailors or, what Europeans call, lascars. They are more or less like Láliás in customs and habits. The Bheels are hill-men, subsisting on the pursuit of the chase and the hunt. In the interior the Bheels go about nearly naked, and if they are at all clothed in leaves, it is to keep off cold. They live in fastnesses, are guided by a strict code of honour, and will not do harm except when injured or provoked. As a race the Bheels are dying out.

The Dublás are very like the Bheels, though more mild in manners. They are inmates of the jungles, and generally come out to serve at village liquor-shops or other manual work

where they are often used very much like bullocks. The *Dublás* are trying to avail themselves of railway communication ; but the newly devised *Abkari* and *Forest* laws tell upon them cruelly. They complain of starvation.

The *Nadás*, *Pomlás* or *Timlás* are rough iron-smelters and collectors of rags and rubbish. They use carrion—dead fowl or animal or reptile—as food.

Now be it known that these wretched creatures, whose very shadow pollutes the lowest of the recognised castes, observe caste distinctions among themselves. They will not dine together, certainly not intermarry.

The lowest of all is the *Páriáh* outcast, hiding himself from public gaze, a thing conscious of hopeless degradation, shunning himself, so to say, as much as he is shunned by others. **O Caste, thou inexorable tyrant, what hope is there for India while thy Jagernaut wheel is grinding man's best nature out of him !** Ye missionaries of Christ, why don't you save these unhappy tribes from perhaps eternal wrong ? What a rich harvest of souls to save !

In its ethical aspects, the Hindu caste may be divided into the Vedic, the Puranic, the Mantric, the followers of Shiva and the votaries of Devi. The purest form of worship, to my mind, is the Vedic. The Arya Samaj of Dayanand, a son of Gujarát, and the Brahmo Samaj of Keshub, have a career which I watch with the keenest interest.

I am told of the Tantric sect in Gujarát, a secret society including high class and low class people alike. The distinguishing feature of the rites of these Tantric philosophers are said to be cannibalism and polyandry. I cannot accept this version as quite correct. But though the sect in one sense demolishes Caste, its practical observances strike an outsider more or less as brutal as well as bestial.

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CHARACTERS.—THE MARWÁRI.

IN going through Gujarát the traveller is sure to come across a character who offers much scope for observation and study. Who has not seen the Márwári?—the professional usurer, so useful and so execrable !

HIS INFANCY.

He hails from Márwár, and is a Jain or Shráwak Hindu. At home, and up to eight years of age, the Márwári is the sprightliest little animal that ever kicked the mother who suckled him. He skips about like a wild kangaroo in the wantonness of unlimited freedom, returning at brief intervals to the warmth of the maternal breast. The little Márwári is kept at the breast till he is eight—till then parental affection is literally lavished on him. Eight is said to be his weaning time, figuratively I suppose ; and with true insight, as soon as he is weaned, he is sent off to these parts in company of an honest acquaintance.

HIS 'PRENTICESHIP.

The little suckling is destined to be a merchant, and to a shopkeeper he is apprenticed

at the first start in life. He is bound to serve the Shett for a number of years, to serve his person and his shop, to help at cooking the meals; he is bound to serve diligently and well, he is bound to *keep secrets*. If he give satisfaction for one year, he may expect a salary of eight annas* a month from beginning of next year. Meantime he looks upon himself as a lucky dog if he can have for his two meals what remains after the master has dined—barely enough to keep body and soul together. But the boy who, only a month ago, led the life of an infant epicure, indulging every pleasure and every liberty dear to childhood, repines not at the change that has come over his bright young life. He slaves at his work heroically, bent upon learning the craft by which his master has raised a fortune. This alchemy the young apprentice is determined to master, and to that end he strives with incredible diligence to ingratiate himself with his employer, and he succeeds. His half rupee pay is increased to Rs. 3 a month. He becomes the confidential *moonim*, the *factotum*, the *alter ego* of his master, and is entrusted with the sole business when the latter goes home for a holiday. The return of the chief marks

* About a shilling.

a new era in the existence of our Márwári. He, who was only the other day a thoroughly mercurial being, has now changed into a staid, sober shopkeeper. He opens a shop on his own account. His earnings of so many years will suffice for the purpose ; if not, he can borrow of his master, whose interest in him is not nominal. He can borrow from Rs. 50 to Rs. 100. Under more favourable circumstances he can borrow Rs. 500, though he seldom needs so much to start with.

THE MÁRWÁRI HIS OWN MASTER.

And now our Márwári has his own shop. He generally begins with salt, oil, grain, fuel, or other cheap nick-nacks. The Márwári never deals in anything which will not bring at least cent. per cent. profit. One might ask how he can have the courage, though his conscience is up to it, to ask double for such articles as oil, rice, fuel, &c. Well, it is thus :—The Márwári buys his articles of the poorest quality at the cheapest market. He buys when things go merely for the asking. He buys in the lump, and charges a heavy discount. He keeps shop in a locality from which the nearest market measures by the mile. He sells his

goods on credit, and, of course, in retail. He weighs and measures as he likes, and the customer has only to smile and accept the article held out. His weights and measures are not of the latest make, and he often substitutes pieces of stone for standard weights. It is easy now to see how the Márwári earns cent. per cent. at his shop.

HIS *MODUS OPERANDI*.

The Márwári allows credit to the customers till it has reached, say a rupee; then begins the interest at two annas a month; then it becomes a book debt; then is required a security—an old ring, a few cooking utensils, some wearing apparel, &c. These are lodged with the Márwári till the lodger has drawn upon the shop for about half their value. Fresh security is now required if fresh supplies of rotten grain, adulterated oil, wet fuel, &c., are applied for. On all “reasonable” security he is ready to give, says the Márwári, but the customers must know that he has to meet his own liabilities. He charges heavy interest for the credit money on the plea that he has to replace the goods disposed of on credit by new supplies for which he has to tell down cash, which

he is forced to borrow. Besides, he turns to account the security lodged with him. He lends the ring, the clothes, the utensils, or the furniture to others, and charges for the use. He is not responsible for the wear and tear; if those who have lodged the articles with him object to their being used, why, they must close the account with him! *He* must live somehow! and so on, and so on. It is no use arguing with the Márwári, he will circumvent you everywhere. He lends and you borrow; it follows he should command and you obey.

HIS MODE OF RECOVERY.

The Márwári will lend and sell on credit to the last pie compatible with safety. Infinite is his power of lending, so is his power of recovering. He manages to meet the debtor on pay day, on the very threshold of his office. He offers every facility to the debtor to earn money enough to repay. If the debtor seems to bear the Márwári's exactions with ease, he may be sure he will not be out of his debt. But the moment the Márwári finds difficulty in repayment, he sets about squeezing the last drop out of the unhappy wretch. He removes from the house everything worth removing.

He appeals to the debtor's employers to give him the month's wages; he puts himself in communication with the debtor's rich relatives. He appeals to their *abru*.* He takes the debtor's wife and sisters and daughters in hand. He opens out new avenues of income for them. He sends some of them to factory work, others into domestic service. The Márwári does not scruple to put his victims to the vilest uses, so he can recover what he thinks to be his due. It is suspected that full half of the inmates of Kamatipora are the victims of the Márwári's cruel persecutions, the female friends of the wretch who began his acquaintance with the Márwári with buying a pound of sugar on credit, and has ended that ill-fated acquaintance in the ruin of his manhood. When all this fails to satisfy the relentless fiend, he resorts to the Small Cause Court. He has a great friend of some of the underlings there, and those who know what a summary suit is, need not be told that the Márwári has the power to sell by auction everything the debtor may possess. He often buys up everything himself.

THE MÁRWÁRI'S VICTIMS.

The Márwári feeds upon the poorer classes of Hindus—our factory hands, house servants,

* Credit, honour.

and small handicraftsmen. His policy is the policy of the "long rope." He lends and lends till the man is completely in his power. There are Mussalmans, too, in the Márwári's debt; and when he finds it is impossible to get anything out of a poor beggar, he sets him to steal. There may be many a notorious Mussalman thief who is driven to the trade by the Márwári, who is his instigator and accomplice. The Márwári is invariably the repository of stolen goods. Parsis and Portuguese, too, the Márwári lays under contribution, especially clerks and mechanics. But these victims are apparently getting used up, so thinks the Márwári, and he scorns to deal with them. Europeans and Eurasians are not without the pale of the Márwári's influence. He will lend when the bank fails a poor fellow. When the manager dismisses Augustus Hardup, of the G. I. P. Railway, the Márwári is his refuge. It is with the Márwári's money that Augustus applies for another place; it is with the Márwári's money that Augustus woos and wins the widow Pereira with Rs. 10,000 under trust, left by the ugly old apothecary, her first husband. It is also with the Márwári's money that Augustus goes to Poona, Jubbulpore, and other likely places in search of employment—never to

return. But the Márwári has security at least in the person of a friend of Augustus decamped. This worthy, an inmate of the workhouse, generally pays the Márwári with kicks and cuffs. He shakes off the bore once for all, and after that is never troubled by his dun.

THE MÁRWÁRI AS A MEMBER OF SOCIETY.

Thus lives the Márwári, buying and selling, lending and recovering, scheming, bullying, and going to court. His life is a continued struggle with his better part. But so successfully does he wrestle with himself, that before thirty he has ceased to be a human being. Before thirty he is a money-grubbing machine. He will do anything for money, get money from everything. He works greater havoc in the mofussil than in the Presidency towns. More official minutes and reports have been written on the Márwári than, perhaps, on all the wild beasts and venomous reptiles put together. But the Márwári still flourishes. He threatens to be a permanent fixture.

THE MÁRWÁRI AT HOME.

Next to money the Márwári loves his home in Márwár, then his mother, then his wife and children, then his national music. The Márwári seldom smiles under Rs. 100, but the loss

of a pie will bring tears into his eyes. He has not much religion in him ; and though as an orthodox Hindu he is bound to visit his temple, he seldom does so, unless under inducement of a dinner or a loan. He has not much respect for his gods, and will prefer a Queen's coin to the best of them. In all his habits of life, simplicity, that is, a love of cheapness, is the leading trait. He loves his holidays, and during the *Holi* the Márwári abandons himself to full indulgence of the senses, but he takes care that the carousals do not cost him much in money. " Anything but money, unless it is *for me* " — that is the Márwári's motto. The Márwári makes a good friend so far as his advice goes. He marries late in life, and makes a loving husband and father, so far as love is love without money. He is too fond of hoarding to part with anything unless forced to.

A SOLEMN WARNING.

There is hope for the wildest scapegrace buried in debt, if he has not gone to the Márwári; but once in the Márwári's clutches, not the wealthiest and the goutiest uncle can save him. The man who has escaped the Márwári's grip with a whole coat on has the making of a Finance Minister in him.

THE VILLAGE HAJAAM.

ANOTHER curiosity, by the way, is the village Hajaam, the barber. No native can do without the Hajaam, and as he attends to many other little offices of life besides shaving, it may not be amiss to give an account of his life and labours, in these days of cheap biography. The Hajaam in Gujarát is Hindu by caste; sometimes he is Mussalman. There is no Parsi Hajaam. There are several little handicrafts at which the Parsi flatly refuses to work. He may be a professional gambler or thief, but a Hajaam or blacksmith—never. There are religious scruples in the way of his becoming a Hajaam. According to his Shástras* there is sin in paring the nails or picking up, clipping, or shaving the hair.

HOW THE HAJAAM OPERATES ON A HINDU.

But to return to our Hajaam, and how he operates upon an Aryan brother. The operation generally takes place in the forenoon, immediately before tiffin. Patient and operator squat before each other, each chewing

* Scriptures.

pán supári—a process which the ignorant might mistake, from a distance, for either making faces at the other. After discussion of the latest news, the Hajaam takes out his tweezers and falls to picking the hair off the patient's forehead. There is torture unutterable in this part of the operation; but be it said to the credit of both that the more vigorously plies the hand of the Hajaam, the more gratefully grunts the Aryan brother. The object is *high polish*, and both have set their hearts on that object. As soon as the tonsorial part of the operation is finished, the Hajaam presses the patient's head downwards; and meek as a lamb, the latter bows till his head is fairly ensconced in the Hajaam's brotherly lap. The water is now applied for a few seconds, and then is applied the trusty razor. As it moves backwards and forwards, the razor makes a distinct noise—perhaps a wail complaining of the rough surface to which its edge is applied. When much put out, the razor sometimes makes a gash here or there; but the patient being persuaded that a little blood thus drawn averts apoplexy, submits to the razor's vagaries with cheerfulness, encouraging the Hajaam, every time there is a gash, with a vigorous smack of the lips. It takes about

an hour to shave a well-developed Aryan. The razor has to glance north to south, east to west, to see all is smooth as an ivory ball. This much ascertained, the Hajaam takes a handful of limejuice and rubs it on the newly-shaven cranium with an air of superiority. The patient smarts under this operation just for a moment, but, knowing it to be for his own good, he is the last man to complain. The process is not yet complete. Though the head is as smooth and shiny as ivory, there is something yet to do. There are the cheek-bones to be similarly treated, the hair on the upper lip to be touched up, the hair in the nose and the ears to be picked out, for, with Oriental charity, every respectable Aryan cultivates hair in both these organs to a considerable extent. After the picking, clipping, and shaving are over, there is the nail-paring. Then follows the shampooing. Here the Hajaam puts the patient in various positions, and rubs and scrubs and currycombs him with a vigour that would do good to the heart of a veterinary surgeon to witness. After half an hour thus employed, the patient is released, and the Hajaam is paid about a pennyworth of copper on the assurance that the operation will answer for fifteen days.

HIS MISCELLANEOUS DUTIES.

Thus plies the Hajaam at his principal work. He is good at many other jobs besides. He is the hereditary torch-bearer of the village, and has the honour of lighting in or out the Collector or his young man. The Hajaam is also a good pleader, not a High Court or District Court pleader please, but a *pleader*—that is, he pleads the cause of an enamoured youth before his divinity. The village Hajaam is the priest of Hymen, and his wife is the accoucheur-general of the village. This is a fair division of labour between husband and wife.

The village Hajaam is also a good herbalist, and in this respect sometimes a more trustworthy person than every L. M. and S.*—he never poisons his patients nor hacks and hews their limbs.

The village Hajaam labours under one sad infirmity. He has a very loose tongue. He is an incorrigible gossip. The best use you can make of your enemy's secret is to entrust it to the Hajaam. If you want the secret to be most widely known, just say you give it

* Bombay Licentiate of Medicine and Surgery, a passed medical man.

him in *strict confidence*. He will rush off to the bazaar* directly he leaves you, and will not rest till the whole village knows the secret, of course with due exaggerations, but in *strict confidence*.

But though the village Hajaam is a great "spendthrift of his tongue," he never dabbles in politics. He has an idea that the Police Superintendent is the natural enemy of those who discuss politics, and that he has the power of hanging any such person in the back part of the jail at the Collector's command.

* Market quarters.

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THE VA'QUIL.

ANOTHER character, as busy as the Hajaam, and about as popular as the Márwári, is the mofussil Vakeel (Pleader), or, as Persian scholars would call him, the Va'quil.

A Va'quil* may be described as a column of vapour issuing from the Ocean of Emptiness. When condensed, after repeated manipulations, by the Professor of Law, and mixed with a strong solution of *brass*, the Va'quil is rolled up before the Chief Justice, who licks him into shape, generally after tiffin. The exercise is said to be very exhilarating for both parties. As soon as the Chief Justice has licked into shape and breathed life into him† the Va'quil starts up as if from a state of *Nirvana*,‡ rubs his eyes, stretches his arms, and, shuffling out of the august presence, passes the rest of the day in contemplation. Under cover of night the Va'quil steals homewards, and hiding his guilty head in the bosom of a greasy quilt, he cries for relief.

* He is loquacious and assertive, say his enemies.

† The Va'quil gets his *sunud* or diploma from the Chief Justice after an examination.

‡ Absorption, the Buddhist theory.

THE VA'QUIL'S FIRST START.

Next morning the Va'quil is placed in a cage* on a fashionable road, where he can be interviewed from a safe distance, for about Rs. 3. The fee rises from Rs. 3 to Rs. 30, according to circumstances. But it is very seldom that the fee comes. This process of the Va'quil's profitless exhibition is technically termed "vegetation." In this state he remains from six to twelve months, when he begins to bud forth into something like a useful being.

THE VA'QUIL WITH THE MÁRWÁRI.

At this stage the Va'quil is taken in hand by a Márwári, or such another worthy recognised by the Court as *Dalál†* or *Mukhtyár*. But his existence is not yet generally recognised. He has more leisure than he cares to have, which he devotes to the columns of the *Amrita Bazár Patrika*, the pages of *Malthus*, of the *Sarvajanik Sabha*, or the *Theosophist*.

THE VA'QUIL DABBLES IN POLITICS.

The Va'quil is now about thirty, and has already joined several institutions where he

* Shop or Office.

† Law-broker.

can sit cross-legged and read the newspaper and discuss the leading articles with friends. This he does in the evening. Occasionally he borrows a Famine Report, on which he pores for nights together. The result of this lucubration is a lengthy critique on Sir Richard Temple's administration, especially his famine and forest policy. At times the Va'quil draws a caricature of the late Governor, and, when he can afford to do so, he buys cheap photographs of him, Sir John Strachey, and others, which he hangs in his room head downwards. The practice may or may not have a significance.

THE VA'QUIL RETIRES.

At forty the Va'quil becomes staid and sober. His youthful exuberance, which found vent in elocutional antics in obscure reading-rooms, is now exchanged for argumentative criticism of the measures of Government, at public meetings. He also takes to strictly religious and patriotic modes of life—disposes of his offspring in marriage, retires to his *gaum*, encourages indigenous art by using everything that is made in India, and generally dies at the age of sixty. The Va'quil dies, as a rule, in fairly

good circumstances, though he does not live so. Formerly he used to migrate into the mofussil immediately on coming out of the larva state; but the Collector and his brood of assistants having made the districts quite unendurable for him, the Va'quil seldom goes far beyond Poona on one side or Ahmedabad on the other.

THE VA'QUIL'S COMPOSITION, NATURE, &c.

As a chemical compound, the Va'quil is described by the Collector and the Political Agent, who are, by the bye, his natural enemies, as consisting of butter, brass, and asafœtida.

Physiologically, they say, he takes after the kangaroo, and has much of the intellectual force which is believed to be derived from daily indulgence in vegetable marrow.

Official phrenologists are also agreed that the most prominent characteristics of the Va'quil are the bumps of combativeness, of secretiveness, and obstructiveness.

But whatever the official báhádur may say, the Va'quil is a friend of the people. When his fee-earning fever is gone, the Va'quil becomes a custodian of public interests. He is

the backbone of the standing opposition which is so often a thorn in the side of bureaucracy. The Va'quil defies the mamlatdar, the sirkarkun and other knights of the feather; and even when it comes to a fight with the Collector, the Va'quil will not shirk it—nay, he will at times beard the lion in his den.

SCENES IN A SMALL CAUSE COURT.

SWEARING AND ALL.

HAVING described the Pleader or Va'quil, I might as well record here some trying personal experiences in the Court of Small Causes—experiences which more than confirm the popular belief as to the glorious uncertainty of law, and which may be of use to some unwary simpleton like myself.

I once perpetrated a book. It was a wonderful book that, no two critics agreeing as to its merits; but it brought in a good deal of money, a good deal of praise, and a good deal of abuse. Amongst the many other things this wondrous book of mine brought me was a Small Cause Court summons. The poets sing of "death and doom." I had a very vivid idea of these unwelcome twins when the summons was put into my hands. I went about my business with my poor knees knocking together; and, though friends assured me that I had nothing to apprehend, I felt a vague foreboding of the goods and chattels at home being sold by auction, and myself being sent to jail for at least six months. In those moments of trouble I did

not think well of my poor book. The suit was for recovery of Rs. 200, or something like 60 per cent. of the value of copies sold, for their *delivery in town* and such other services. I have paid more handsomely for still lighter services, but could not do so this time. It was not a question of will, but of power. I and my friends proposed all manner of compromises, but the man was obdurate. He had made up his mind to milk his cow dry. He had retained the services of a Va'quil, and nothing less than Rs. 200 and counsel's fee would satisfy him. In a word, there was nothing for it but to go to Court and contest the claim. So one fine day off I went to Court with a number of friends and followers. At first it felt as if one were going to his own funeral. We paused at the door of the Court, and, looking round to see if the eye of the public was on us, we rushed in, breathless with suppressed excitement. Inside we were besieged by a number of *daláls* offering their services. I had no occasion for such services, as my friends said there was an excellent pleader to plead the cause. But the case was to come on late in the day; and as the feeling of horror subsided by degrees, I allowed myself to be taken to various parts of the court-house just to divert my thoughts.

At every step almost we encountered a knot of Márwáris engaged in hasty but animated conversation with the harpy of a *dalál*. These, we were told, were concocting a story to ruin some poor debtor. False documents, false witnesses, and every other form of perjury were here gone through in open daylight, and almost in the presence of the judge. The Márwári seldom gets a Va'quil to conduct his case. Between himself and the Mooktiár they often hoodwink justice.

SUMMARY SUITS.

From here we moved on to the court of the last judge, a native gentleman. His Honour had just then a case before him. A house-owner was asking for the removal of his tenant, a poor Goanese. The Bible was given and the oath mumbled. Then asked His Honour of the defendant :

“How many months?”

“Seven months, Sor,” replied poor Caitan.

“How many rupees a month?” asked His Honour again.

“Foive rupees, Sor,” replied Caitan.

“Decree for Rs. 35, with costs, time up to the first,” drawled His Honour, turning to the clerk.

“Call next case,” continued the Judge, asking for another case to be decided.

“But, Sor, me paid two months’ rent regularly,” whined Caitan.

“Appeal to Full Court,” drawled His Honour, turning condescendingly to the man.

This was a “summary” suit, we were told by our guide. It was. We waited for two other cases. We saw a good deal of swearing by the Book, and a good deal of audacious and easily-detected lying gone through in turn. But except for the Judge’s frown, we noticed no other punishment for false witness. All this was far from reassuring to me, and I once more requested friends to compromise with my persecutor, as the case would be soon coming on. Negotiations were opened, but now the pleader on the other side told my friends he could not conscientiously advise his client to withdraw. We saw we had to take our chance; but there was some hope in the Judge, before whom we were presently to stand, being reputed a patient and an impartial man.

We entered the room, and on our pleader asking the interpreter where His Honour was, that pompous functionary declared: "The *Court* have gone to —— water." There was no time to laugh over this interpreter's joke, for the "Court," alleged to have been in such undignified occupation, had already returned. The Judge fell to business at once. The complainant, my persecutor, was administered the oath. He promised by the life of every one of his 330,000,000 gods to tell the truth, "and nothing but the truth." The Judge asked the interpreter if the complainant had been sworn. "Swored, your Honour," vociferated that obliging official. Then the complainant was asked to say what he had done for the defendant to earn Rs. 200. Hereupon, the man who had just a minute ago solemnly pledged himself to truth, gave utterance to a number of lies appalling in their magnitude. I and my friends were astounded. Complainant deposed to having witnesses to corroborate the statement that he had done enough to earn Rs. 200.

His Va'quil looked triumphant, mine was quite crest-fallen. I was shivering, as if with the ague, and a young friend actually burst into violent gesticulations at the man perjuring

himself with such malignity of purpose. The Judge then asked for a few particulars. Among these the complainant, unfortunately for himself, stated that he had procured for the defendant a loan of Rs. 100, at 36 *per cent. per annum*.

“Is this to be one of the *services* entitled to a honorarium of Rs. 200, Mr.———?”, asked the Judge, turning with benevolent surprise upon the plaintiff’s pleader.

The game was lost. Client and counsel looked foolish. Every remark they hazarded after this miscarried. Witnesses for the plaintiff were at last called. Like true men of the world, these Aryan gentlemen had already vanished! Profiting by the turn affairs had taken, all of them had bolted except one, and this man in his evidence damaged complainant’s case, whispering to him after every pause, “I told you I would tell the truth; I have to face my Maker.” The Judge having done taking his notes, the complainant’s counsel opened his speech. The Aryan orator began somewhat in this strain:—

“Although my client is *confounded* here and there, I have reason to believe that he is an

honest man ; he is also elderly. The defendant is a mere lad who owes much to my client. He more than once offered to compromise. Why, if his conscience did not prick him ? Having made these general observations, I now leave the matter with your Honour, only remarking in the end that my client has a large family," &c., &c.

The defending counsel, knowing full well that in certain cases silence is golden, merely said, "I can do no better than leave the case entirely to your Honour."

The Judge awarded the plaintiff about Rs. 30, which, seeing that he had promised a much larger sum to the Va'quil who had picked up his case, was a sore disappointment. The Judge passed severe strictures on the complainant's conduct, and his judgment was received with delight by all save two in the room.

But I have not looked upon the issue of the case as a success. What I suffered that day in mind I have not yet forgotten. Even in the hour of triumph I wished I had never gone to Court. What a ruin I had so narrowly escaped ! But for the Judge having been patient and considerate, for his having that day

assumed the double *rôle* of judge and counsel, it is impossible to tell where I would have been. And though the visions of bankruptcy and jail were the offspring of my morbid imagination, there is no doubt that, with a hasty and inexperienced judge, I would not have been able to clear myself of the many charges foisted upon me by the baffled fiend. Since, then, in the plenitude of my experience, I have warned all from going to Court. Suffer any amount of reasonable inconvenience, but do not rush into courts of law. You can never be sure of what may happen. Courts of law are a luxury for the well-to-do and the nothing-to-do. Audacious lying and deliberate perjury sometimes get the better of truth. Where there are men ready to swear away your reputation, your best course is to avoid coming in contact with them. Pay any small sum if you chance to stumble upon such persons, but go not to courts of law, especially with a *summary* suit, where perjury has the greatest chance of success.

SCENES IN A JOHUKUM* MAGISTRATE'S COURT.

No mortal thinks himself so happy as the *Johukum* Magistrate in India. But there are times when even he, whose smile gives life to the evil-doer, and whose frown annihilates him, feels insecure and uneasy. He does not fear the Collector, the Judge, the Revenue Commissioner, or the Governor himself. He meets the requisition of each with *nonchalance*. But whenever he hears that an English barrister is engaged to plead for a prisoner before him, or that a European soldier or sailor is defendant in a suit, the *Johukum* Magistrate loses his appetite and his sleep. He studies his Penal Code as he never studied the most sacred of his *shástras*. He also reads his Compendium of English Grammar and Composition, and on the day the case is to appear, goes to Court after many prayers and supplications to the gods to "preserve his *abru*."† Poor native suitors know the *Majishter's* weakness, and take all precautions they can to counteract its effects.

* *Johukum*="As you please," Servile,

† Reputation.

Some time ago one of these dispensers of justice had to decide a case in which the town barber was plaintiff and a discharged Irish soldier defendant. The soldier seems to have thrashed the barber for reasons best known to himself. Now the barber, who was a man of sense, knew that he could not establish his case against the white man. So, with grim Oriental humour, he made his mother-in-law plaintiff in the case, and with the aid of two or three trumpery witnesses, undertook to prove that the soldier had assaulted the "poor defenceless woman" in a field of *bájri** hard by, and that the whole town knew of it. The barber had only recently married a fourth wife, with a neat little dowry; so he said, "As *Prabhu*† has given me the means, I am determined to set an example." With this purpose in view, the barber went to the best pleader in his town, a very learned man, who "had once been to Bombay." What better counsel for a righteous cause?

On the day fixed for hearing the Court was crowded by spectators, some of them Parsi lads on a holiday tour. The Magistrate came first, looking very mild and anxious. Then

* Millet.

† His god.

came the soldier, looking very cool and careless. Third came the plaintiff's pleader, looking very warm and important, and with a robe and high-heeled creaking boots on. Last of all came the plaintiff, the barber's mother-in-law, with a crowd at her back. She seemed to have rheumatism, paralysis, and many other dreadful ailments besides.

"From the tears she shed in the streets," explained the jocular Mussalman constable, "one might think we had rain last night; at any rate, there will be no need for watering the streets this noon" !

A minute or two after the proceedings were formally opened. I shall only transcribe here the supposed examination of the soldier by the barber's counsel.

VA'QUIL (*with easy familiarity, and intending to procure confession. for the mere asking*).—Well, my man, why did you do this thing ?

SOLDIER.—What thing ?

VA'QUIL.—You know it, *is it not* ?

SOLDIER.—Hanged if I *du* !

VA'QUIL.—Don't use vulgar curses; you should not be *contemptible* towards the Court.

SOLDIER.—What d'ye want, thin ?

VA'QUIL.—Did you assault *this lady*, or not ?

SOLDIER (*looking at the lady and breaking out into a hoarse laugh*).—Did ye see me assault her ?

VA'QUIL.—No, but others did. It was a most indecent and brutal outrage, and you will have at least five years for it.

SOLDIER.—Ye are a d——d——. Why the dickins should I assault that hag ? Ax her yersel, ye murdhering thafe !

VA'QUIL (*in a dreadful funk, turning to the Magistrate*).—I seek your Worship's protection of my person and property.

MAGISTRATE.—*Chhut, chhut*, Mr. Rámdás. What do you mean by *indecent* assault in this case ? That word should not be imported at all ; it is not in the original plaint.

VA'QUIL.—By the fifth of——

MAGISTRATE.—Nonsense, all nonsense ; that applies to cases of murder only.

VA'QUIL (*in sulks*).—I will then leave the

case to your Worship. I can go to the High Court.

SOLDIER (*to the Magistrate*).—Why don't ye lave this varmint to me, and ye ax the old woman hersel ?

MAGISTRATE.—Mr. Soldier, don't use bad words. Yes, I'll ask the woman.

SOLDIER.—Begorra, ye are a handsome gintleman, yar honour.

MAGISTRATE (*to the barber's mother-in-law*).—Here, woman, stand up. Did the sahib assault you ?

WOMAN (*blubbing*).—You are my father and mother !

MAGISTRATE.—You will have to be fined if you don't answer directly. Did the sahib beat you ?

WOMAN.—I am a poor widow ; my husband used to shave you, *mábáp* !*

MAGISTRATE (*losing his temper*).—Here, Jemadar,—now, will you answer or not ? Did this *sojer* beat you at all ?

* Mother and father.

WOMAN.—*Mábáp*, beating my son-in-law is beating me ! (*Va'quil hanging down his head, barber looking daggers at his dear wife's mother, magistrate tittering and soldier smiling.*) The whole town knows it.

MAGISTRATE.—Knows what ?

WOMAN.—That I am an honest woman !

MAGISTRATE.—But, woman, that is not the question.

WOMAN.—That my Lakhí's father shaved you !

MAGISTRATE (*turning in disgust to the Va'quil*).—Mr. Rámdás, you see the defendant may have assaulted another person.

VA'QUIL (*taking up the cue*).—Did you assault this gentleman ? (*pointing to the barber and asking the soldier.*)

SOLDIER.—Now, say ye so, me jewil !

VA'QUIL (*sententiously*).—Weigh your words.

SOLDIER.—How kin I weigh me words ?

VA'QUIL.—Sir, have you come here to *brandy* words with me ?

SOLDIER.—Do ye think so, thin ?

Va'QUIL (*furiously.*)—Now, hold *out* your tongue, Sir.

Pat seized this golden opportunity, and throwing a world of solemnity into his attitude, *held out* his tongue—a big, red, lolling thing—to the infinite amusement of the spectators, who knew not why they laughed. The Va'quil was dumb-founded ; the barber looked at him with pity and contempt. The Magistrate was convulsed with laughter ; he thrust his silk handkerchief into his mouth till he was nearly suffocated.

The case may be taken as dismissed.

♦

NATIVE MENDICANTS.

INCLUDING THE AGHORI.

ONE of the most prominent sights, though none of the pleasantest, that the visitor encounters in Gujarát, is the professional beggar. No people had ever before them higher ideals of charity than the Hindus. As in the new, so in the old world, charity has been the corner-stone of the edifice of Faith. But nowhere, not even in Christian Europe, have the subtler and more potent forms of charity been so fully realised as in the land of the Aryas. It is only in these degenerate days that ideas of charity have grown vague and puerile. Charity at present, with many of our well-to-do men, signifies the giving away of superfluous wealth to the worthy or the unworthy, for certain objects, especially what they call "personal distinction." It is wise of the Government to recognise public spirit by the grant of titles; but the indiscriminate showering of these empty honours is perverting

the popular instinct of charity. No one in these days can indulge the luxury of giving away a few thousand rupees, however earned, without being overtaken for his folly by the inevitable Khán Bahádurship or some such "mark of His Excellency's favour." The grand old doctrine of THINKING WELL, SPEAKING WELL, AND ACTING WELL—the triple badge of Oriental charity—is becoming forgotten day by day, and in its stead we have a grosser, an unreal substitute, *the giving to others that which may not be of particular use to oneself*. It is hard to convince some people that there is not the least flavour of charity in the miser leaving his millions to a charitable institution. There is no merit in it. The wretch leaves his hoardings behind, simply because he cannot take them with him to where both the miser and his money are equally unwelcome.

THE MENDICANT CLASS.

One of the best means, perhaps, to obtain an insight into the principle and working of charity in this country—thus far materialised—is by a study of its mendicant class, a numerous and potential factor of the great Indian population. A study of their habits and modes of

life would be highly interesting. But what I can here do is to briefly characterise each division, and leave the reader to take the cue for further investigation and comparison.

STREET PENSIONERS.

First among native mendicants we shall take the street pensioners—a numerous body of men, women, and children, partly diseased but wholly indolent, who infest the streets by day and night, and are content with a morsel of rice for a meal. They are Hindus as well as Mahomedans, and are patronised indiscriminately, though not to an equal extent. The Hindus reserve their favours more or less for their own people; and so do the Mahomedans for their people. The former generally give their pensioners what remains of the food after the household have partaken of it. The Mahomedans often do more. They cook a huge quantity of rice and *dal** on particular holidays, and it is a sight to see the lazy fellows falling to the godsend, licking their fingers and smacking their lips at short intervals.

WHITE MENDICANTS.

Hebrew mendicants are not a rare sight in our streets. They are generally females with

* Pulse.

a troop of children, their own or borrowed for the occasion. It is not an offensive sight, this group of quietly-clamorous "white" beggars. But it is not a credit to the rich and influential class to which the beggars belong. In this respect, as also in another wherein the insensibility of the elders is much more reprehensible, our Hebrew brethren might easily imitate the Parsis. A sort of arrangement was, I believe, attempted some years ago, but the people break loose from it. It also seems that they cannot do without begging and the other vice. In the former avocation, if not in the latter, they have Europeans and Parsis mostly for their patrons.

PRIVATE AND PROFESSIONAL MENDICANTS.

But let us return to the mendicant proper to India—the indigenous growth. He appears in various guises—the *Sáin*, the *Mowlá*, the *Fakir*, the *Sádhu*, the *Bhata*, the *Chárana*, the *Gosain*, the *Jogi*, the *Gora*—and their females. Some of these are public beggars, the rest being private or professional. They are gentle or violent in their clamours as circumstances warrant. They go from house to house and shop to shop, and adopt various expedients to

obtain their "due." They sing, dance, philosophise; they cry, curse, and raise a storm, in order to move the hard-hearted Bania. They are more powerful than the police, and certainly more numerous. The respectable ones are also professional. For instance, there is the poetic mendicant, with his harp, his *veno*,* or other rickety instrument. There is the historical mendicant, with his rag of a Sanskrit or Persian reference-book; there are the astronomical, the medical, the moral mendicants, all with their peculiar hobbies and peculiar twangs, always amiable and often instructive. Then there is the friendly mendicant, generally a Mahomedan, who will button-hole you in the streets, discuss with you a variety of subjects, from polite literature to the rates of salt fish, and then, just before parting, startle you with the whispered query, "By the bye, do you, Sir, happen to have a loose pie† in your pocket?"

DOMESTIC MENDICANTS.

But the most influential of all is the religious order of mendicants. It begins with the domestic priest, the Guru, and ends with that

* A sort of guitar.

† The smallest copper coin.

disturber of social virtue, the Vallabhacháryan Maháráj. The Guru is as meek as he is sleek, and generally a worthy, jovial fellow, who is much, too much, trusted by the ladies of the house. Then there is the temple priest who keeps the idol, and is, in return, kept in the best style by the worshippers. The *moorlis** of Maháráshtra and their sisters of Bengálá are also subjects of great interest. They are fair devotees who profess to have consecrated their virginity to the favourite god. But they are very obliging creatures; and their highest merit consists in earning most for the temple. Several daring youths, who once crossed the threshold of the Káli temple near Calcutta, are said to have come out of it with recollections of their one night's adventures which are likely to last them their whole life.

THE AGHORI.

We now come to the Aghori mendicant. The Aghori, as his name implies, is an atrocity. It is a human being who, by a series of exercises, has achieved the highest pitch of his ambition—the feelings, habits, the very nature

* Unmarried women supposed to have dedicated themselves to a favourite god or goddess.

of a beast. The Aghori is insensible to all bodily discomforts ; in fact, he courts them. He has been very rare, but by no means altogether extinct. One has only to see him to realise the loathsome object. Dark, muddy, hirsute, with eyes on fire, the nostrils wide-distended, the nails grown to the length of an inch, diseased in various parts of the body, which is actually being worm-eaten, with vermin in the hair of his head, vermin on his body, and generally stark-naked. Such is the Aghori. His look is that of a mad idiot. There are the insane leer, the protruding tongue, the filthy teeth. The Aghori never washes, never dresses. He takes only carrion or putrid food, and drinks foul water. In one hand he carries a human skull, in another some hideous instrument of torture and death. These are his insignia. To complete the picture of this horrible process of brutalisation, it has only to be added that the Aghori besmears himself with filth of every kind. He does not hold human life in the least account. Nothing is too sacred for him. He can enter any house and ask for anything. The least hesitation makes him cut himself or others frightfully. He delights in the infliction of wanton pain. He is particularly fond of human flesh and blood, and

the larger the number of his victims, the higher his merit in this life and the other. With the advent of the British the Aghori has almost disappeared. But he still haunts remote villages, and the havoc he works by his mere appearance is incredible. His sight throws women and children into convulsions, and there are instances of premature and painful births induced by the sight of this atrocious monster.

THE MISSIONARY IN THE MOFUSSIL.

WHAT HE IS LIKE, AND HOW HE COMES INTO THE
WORLD.

IF the visitor is not altogether unlucky, he may, in course of his tour through these parts, meet with the Missionary. The Missionary is a great soul split up by many pettinesses. A man of infinite trust, but slow to trust the heathen; of sanguine hope, but always despairing of the world's future; of boundless charity, and yet very strict in judging of all outside the pale of his little communion. Learned as a book and simple as a child, too sensitive to grovel in poverty, and yet too proud to renounce it—the Christian Missionary presents a strange paradox in the economy of social life in India. There are many theories in circulation amongst the vulgar as to the object of England sending out so many Missionaries to India. The most

original and plausible of these is that when an English pair have no children, they pray to their God, just as we pray to our gods here, to grant them at least a son, who, the parents vow, shall devote his life to preaching Christ to the perishing millions of heathendom; and God being, in popular estimation, always obliging, does not tire of granting such requests.

Infancy and boyhood are a period of severe discipline to the missionary *in embryo*, and of acute anxiety to the parents who, whatever their means, will not rest till the hopeful is an M.A. or a B.D. by the time he is twenty-one. Then he comes to India, generally in connection with a school. Immediately on landing he is taken in hand by the Munshi,* the Pandit,† and the Khabardár or informant. He falls to the work of studying the vernaculars with avidity, and the stories of the Khabardár, too, he swallows with equal zest. In less than two years the *padre* is monarch of all he surveys. He bears a charmed life in the village. He is supposed to be in the Collector's confidence, a favourite with Collector's worthy dame, or of the Engineer's elder sister, who sometimes keeps house for him. The Munshi and the

* Persian and Hindustani teacher. † Sanskrit teacher.

Pandit have taught the *padre* just enough to give him the worst possible idea of Mahomedanism and Hinduism. Duty being a matter of choice with him, the Missionary never hesitates to *hold forth* whenever he can.

HIS DAILY DUTIES.

Let us accompany our friend in his round of daily duties. He begins the day with a short prayer in the little church where all his "people" attend. After the prayer and a few kindly inquiries, the *padre* re-enters his little shell, from which he emerges after breakfast. A few visits to the poor, and then two or three hours of literary work. This done, he goes to school, from which he returns for afternoon tea. This is his leisure-time, when many an honest inquirer reads the Book with him, and retails to him his latest spiritual experiences. About 5 o'clock, the *padre* leaves his neat little cottage on his preaching tour. He walks sometimes for miles together, and returns home exhausted. But he never complains—there is the same bright smile on his face as in the morning, and the early supper and cup of tea are gone through with much pleasant chitchat.

Such is the Missionary in the mofussil. He is not so *stiff* as he used to be, and many of his foibles, too, he is getting under. But the good that is in him would compensate for weaknesses a hundredfold. He has a pronounced predilection for sermons ; but then, that is his craft, his calling, the very mission of the Missionary. It may be that he sometimes emphasizes "hell," "damnation," and such words with a sort of frenzy ; but he always means what he says.

THE MISSIONARY AN INSTITUTION.

It is ridiculous to expect the Missionary to retire for good. He has taken deep root in the soil. He has a firmer hold on our hearts than any earlier growth. The Collector may go, the Engineer may be turned out, the Governor may be recalled, ay, the very Government of the country may change ; but the Missionary will remain. He will endure to the end of time, a monument to the silent influence of his faith. As a friend of the people, an adviser of the State, teacher and guide of youth, preacher of a grand idea, as general leavener of society, the Christian Missionary will always occupy a high and beneficent prominence in India.

One standing complaint against the Missionary is that he reaches the soul through the body. But is that *his* fault? The Aryan Gentoo, of the lower order especially, has so much of body, and so little of soul, that it is impossible to reach the latter before oiling every nook and corner of the "tabernacle of flesh." The Gentoo is of the flesh, fleshy; and as *curry chawal** has a very soothing effect on the flesh, and through it, on what little of soul he may have in him, the *padre* says he is justified in his tactics.

THE MISSIONARY'S WIFE.

To write of the Missionary and omit his good wife would be a sin. She is his right hand, his real helpmate. A simple, unselfish, devoted woman, of even gentler sympathies than his; she often tames him when, under sudden provocation, he forgets the obligations of his sacred office. To the sick and the starving she is an angel of mercy. She ministers both to the body and the soul, and bestowing her little gifts she seems as if actually receiving them. Truly womanlike, she is the best friend of girlhood,

* Rice and Curry.

and parents cheerfully acknowledge this. In all the lighter duties she is indispensable—at marriage, birth, baptism ; whilst it would take too long to tell what good she does in school-work and teaching.

NATIVE MEDICOES.

THIS little essay on the Medical Art as practised in Gujarát would be incomplete without a passing notice of the work of indigenous practitioners. In the economy of a native family the grand-mother plays the part of nurse and doctor. This is well known. The grand-mother or the great-aunt is credited with having at her fingers' ends all requisite knowledge to cure diseases, from cough to cholera. She helps at the birth of the new baby. She puts him in a barrel of cheap brandy to give him warmth after his long confinement. She squirts treacle water down baby's narrow windpipe, and she puts him to bed. She is not like the usual run of cackling busy-bodies, this dear old mother or aunt of the family. From birth up to about seven years old baby is her exclusive charge. She tends him in convulsions and whooping cough, in fever and heat; she pulls him through the teething period. She hovers over him all the restless night while the little sufferer lies tossing in bed, ready with her milk

and her flannel and her syrups; her *barandin* and *kolan water* and her *pankler*. She has a thousand recipes for a thousand infantine ailments. But be it said to her credit, that throughout this period of probation the old lady never experiments on her patient; and as a natural consequence, she never kills, though she seldom cures. Such is, strictly speaking, our family doctor. Though she generally confines her attention to the baby, she is by no means unmindful of the adults of the family. With these she stands in the relation of consulting physician, and often acts as interpreter between the patient and the outside doctor.

Of this latter class there are various species. First is the itinerant lady-doctor. The poor black hill-woman, herself sickly, ill-clad and carrying a bundle of virtuous herbs on her head, and her little family of a boy and a girl in a swing hanging by her arms; and if she have a more numerous progeny, the elder ones trotting by her side. This doctor literally carries her dispensary on her head. She has the whole pharmacopœia by rote, and perambulates the streets, offering the benefit of her drugs and her stock of medicine for fever, for wind, for rheumatism, for paralysis, and medicine for

all other distempers afflicting the Aryan race. She sells her herbs for a mere trifle, often for a morsel of *dálbhát* or a handful of uncooked rice. She seldom examines the patient, but contents herself by prescribing. She expects the patient to know what the matter is with him, and leaves her drug with a few simple directions. But where the patient seeks an examination of his complaint, she may not refuse. And often may this ragged sibyl be seen going with a stout bullocky fellow into a corner, and twisting and turning his limbs with vigorous dexterity, handling him in the roughest manner without much concern. The woman is apparently no prude. She is too poor to be one. She also possesses some occult powers, such as of soothing the turbulent or hysterical to sleep, outstaring the evil-eyed, rubbing the dyspeptic into health, &c. Our itinerant doctor is presumably a married woman—who is her husband is more than what I can say. But she cares not for a husband's protection after she has managed to have a little family. Poor woman ! For her children she will gladly beg in the streets ; and as she cannot borrow, she will not scruple to steal a morsel here and there to lavish on the fatherless bairns. So much for mother's love.

Next to her comes the *Valand* or the village hajaam. He shaves the male population of the village, and sometimes an unfortunate widow. For our present purpose the *Valand* is useful in three ways. He is a skilful hand at cupping, applying leeches and at surgical operations of sorts. From extracting a thorn to puncturing the most dangerous tumour, the *Valand* is invaluable. As for small troubles, such as pimples, moles and other eruptions, his practice is to shave them off the surface. I have seen many a wealthy and well-fed Aryan writhing in the *Valand's* grip, whilst the latter cuts away at the fleshy excrescences, regardless of mute agony, and at times obstreperous remonstrance and abuse. And why do people submit to this vile treatment? Because the homely surgeon of the razor cuts at the root of the disease and heals it with the soothing oil and balms which he carries about with him, the secret of which is only known to the eldest son of the family.

And now come we to the *Vaid*. He is a Hindu, and deals extensively in drugs. He speaks and writes in a jargon which he says is Sanskrit. His forte lies in pills, decoctions and infusions. He takes pleasure in prescrib-

ing in large quantities. What physic he gives for one Aryan man or woman is enough to stagger three Ceylon elephants. He also revels in bitters. His potions are poisonous in taste and nauseating in look. But for all that, it cannot well be denied that the *Vaid* makes an efficient healer. He generally takes time to effect a complete cure. The *Vaid* is by nature very avaricious. And in order to secure his ends he will stoop to any unworthy means. He often lives on the superstitious fears of his patient. He dabbles in magic, astrology and other sciences, and is supposed to have spent a life of exemplary devotion and research for the discovery of the elixir of life. This he holds next to his heart, and gives of it to princes and such others under peculiar circumstances and most favourable conditions. The *Vaid* is a capital hand at *Mantras*, *Tantras*, and various other practices by which the patient may profit when all other efforts of the healing art have failed. He also deals largely in charms and amulets, and is altogether a man of such multifarious experiences, that it would be rank presumption to say he could not cure any form of human disorder by means of his medical or magical art. The *Vaid* is also called *Bhogi*, *Joshi*, &c., and when at the top of his

profession, they call him *Kaviráj*, which must not be mistaken as meaning a poet. The *Kaviráj* is a man deeply learned in the *shástras* and deriving his wonderful power for healing the sick from the primal source of health and knowledge, the *Vedas*.

And then comes our friend the *Hakim*, the Mussalman doctor. He too is a learned man, knows the Koran by heart and can tell the faithful from the *Kufar* at a glance. The *Hakim* is in most respects quite the reverse of the *Vaid*. He is all sweet in manners and conversation, and sweet in his doses. He generally gives powders, and invariably pleasant. He seldom frightens the patient with those ominous shakes of the head which the *Vaid* knows so well to practise. The *Hakim Saheb* is bright and pleasant, promising rapid cure and professing the utmost indifference as to pecuniary gains. He does all for *Allah*; but at the same time he will not object to accepting anything the patient may offer. It is the *Hakimji's* creed that *Allah* cures fastest those who pay handsomest. His system of medicine is called *Unáni* or Grecian. His doses are not so drastic nor so nauseating as of the Hindu *Vaid*. Sweet herbs and fruits, dried and pow-

dered, and sometimes boiled and mixed with sugar, generally suffice for the most chronic disorder. But though thus far unlike the *Vaid*, the *Hakim* is quite another *Vaid* in exercising mysterious influence over the patient. There is a strong mixture of superstition in his prescriptions. He sometimes cures by breath, touch or speech. Sometimes he gives the patient little pieces of paper scribbled upon in mysterious hieroglyphics to be washed in a glass of water and drunk. Various theories have for some time been afloat as to the significance of these bits of paper, the most rational, but only plausible, I believe, being that the ink in which the *Hakim* scribbles his charm is some medicinal juice of potent virtue.

Before closing this brief account, I may take the occasion to introduce to European readers the well-known Parsi bone-doctor, or, as he is popularly called, bone-setter. Bhimji was his name; and this Bhimji has left a pretty numerous family of Bhimjis who can be seen in various parts of Gujarát ready to restore the broken or dislocated limb. Their skill excites wonder. They will do what the European doctor has given up in despair. The founder of the family, who is said to have acquired the

secret of the curious art from a *Yogi*, used his opportunities with enviable success. In fact, he made a name, and is remembered, long after his death, with gratitude. He is well represented; and the little craft which he ennobled into an art is as much sought after to-day as it used to be in his time.

And here ends my description of the various native practitioners of medicine. Each variety is useful in itself, and each has peculiar advantages over any other. The *Vaids* and *Hakims* are useful to society as before, though no doubt there is much reason in the cry against them of the English doctor. But there are quacks in every community, and the *Vaids* and *Hakims* form no exception. There are men, however, in this much decried profession, including Parsis, of course, whose insight into the nature of diseases, and whose knowledge of specifics are marvellously correct, and are superior in this respect to the arrogant, ever-experimenting G. G. M. C. or L. M. and S.

NATIVE TERMS OF ABUSE.

SYMPTOMS, CAUSES AND TREATMENT THEREOF.

THE terms of abuse amongst Natives are numerous as the hair on one's head. An English writer thinks they are the exclusive property of the Mahomedan rough. By no means. The writer is not native, to the manner born ; and in his weakness he errs. The lower order of Mahomedans do abuse, to be sure ; and sometimes they abuse till the ears of the listener split with shame. But to the true Mahomedan an abuse is an abomination, as much as *Sharáb*, which means spirituous drink. According to my experience Hindus and Parsis are the most skilful abusers. This may be a revelation ; but it is best to look a violent disease in the face. Native terms of abuse are of endless variety. There is the male and the female abuse, the boy or girl imitating his or her parent of either sex. Then there is the moral, social or political abuse ; the professional abuse, the shop abuse, the street abuse, the school abuse, the home abuse. (By *abuse* I mean bad language.) In fact, there is not a phase of life

which has not a department of choice words, all its own. Among all these the most virulent and the most shocking is the social abuse. The symptoms generally common to all phases are—swelling of the veins, protruding of the tongue, glaring of the eyes and hoarseness of the voice. The symptoms are as multifarious as are the causes. But in every case the coarseness and the rancour concentrate about the social abuse. The other forms are not so venomous. They are not so prurient as in this case. The female abuse, that is, the words used by a female against another, consists of ‘death and disease,’ with now and then a gentle hint as to the abused being guilty of bigamy, of being a witch and other impossible things. At this stage the faithful recorder must not forget to record that there is bad the friendly abuse and the abuse hostile. The parent may reprobate the child, and the child may remonstrate with the parent. This language of reprobation and remonstrance resembles, but is not abuse. The genuine abuse ought to have the element of hostility in it. ‘May you or yours have liver, spleen, headache, heartburn’; ‘may you and yours die and go to hell’; these are the specimens when two females exchange unfriendly words. When the

disease has developed, it breaks out in charges of bigamy, abduction, bewitchment, &c. But be it said to the credit of the sex, that on no account and in no circumstance do they resort to terms of abuse expressed by males. Nature is ever true to herself; and the wise doctor need not wonder at even a degraded and illiterate sex in India refusing to court a moral contamination which is worse than death to her finer, though alas! uncultivated feeling. The male abuse has an infinitely wider range and an infinitely nastier ring. To begin with home abuse, the simplest form is to call the offender *sálo*, that is wife's brother. To the European reader there may be nothing particularly disagreeable in this familiarity. But he will see that when a married man calls another *sálo* with whose sister he has *not* married, the thing ceases to be a joke. And yet, it is considered a very ordinary and very harmless abuse. It is applied in conversation to the greatest warrior or statesman, as also to the most venial delinquent. Amongst low-class Hindus it is applied by the father to the son and by the son to the father. In this sense the word *sálo*, no doubt, means 'rogue.' In a more extended sense it means rascal, villain, fool and so forth. The other home abuses

are more or less like other abuses. Amongst school abuses the select ones are dunderpate, dolt, mincing idiot, tremendous piece of stone, &c. At the shop the customer calls the defaulting shop-keeper 'swindling rascal,' 'the son of a butcher,' &c., which compliments the shop-keeper repays with 'stony miser,' 'ill-omened owl,' 'custom-taking-away spectre,' and so forth. But the most dangerous of all is the social abuse, the bad language used in a social connection. It is the bane of native society. It poisons infancy, seduces youth, and disgraces age. In variety and vituperation, in rancour and prurience, in revolting obscenity, the native social abuse is unrivalled. No sentiment is too vulgar, no epithet too brutal for the native abuser. He is not content with abusing his enemy himself, but his whole family, his ancestors and his descendants. What is most to be remarked about these wholesale denunciations, is that the females of the household the daughter, sister, aunt, mother, grandmother, form the butt and target of ribald language. It is through the female that the male is abused: the implied dishonour of his female relatives is the sweetest revenge a man takes upon his opponent. And in this direction there is no relation of life which is too sacred

for the vulgar abuser. There is no moral depravity which the abuser's mind would seem incapable of conceiving ; whilst there are some abuses the scope, or even possibility, of which cannot be conceived. Old men of sixty or seventy see no harm in abusing their enemies in the most indecent language in the presence of their wives and daughters and granddaughters, and these latter are in no way surprised at the vagaries of the hoary libertines. They may shiver with inward shame, poor creatures, or leave the room, if they dare so far. But as a rule they get used to the thing and take it as a matter of course. Little boys of six and seven utter words revolting in their exquisite ingenuity. The vulgarest and coarsest expression comes so natural to the precocious abuser, that one would be excused if he thought that native children sucked the spirit of vituperation at the mother's breast. They certainly do not know the precise significance of the choice epithets they retail ; but what with home influence and the influence of older and more depraved companions, they manage to learn it all too soon. And it is not a very unusual sight to see a little profligate of eight or nine abusing his opponent in the street with such extreme unction that the spectator may not hesitate to conclude

that the little boy of eight or nine, on whose lips the mother's milk has scarcely dried, is already initiated into the mysteries of vile animal nature. The effects of such customs can be imagined. Hindus and Parsis are equally bad. I am, of course, speaking of the lower strata of society. But at the same time it would be well to say that even in the higher circles both sections use language in ordinary conversation, which is decidedly objectionable. Your Parsi or Hindu Shett, who is looked upon as somewhat of a witty animal, cracks jokes at his table, which have no pleasanter element in them than of defamation and dishonour. But, as I said, the worst forms of the evil are encountered in the street. There the disease is uncontrolled. It is worse than cholera or small-pox, inasmuch as it contaminates generation after generation. It is time native society were purged of this deadly moral taint. To the timid maiden, the modest wife, the sober matron, it is worse than death to have to listen to words which would 'rend the web of heaven' or 'move the bowels of the earth.' I know of no plague which enjoys such unlimited power for evil, and at the same time such immunity from our social or civic law. The street boy, the shop-keeper, the cart-driver, has each a

vocabulary of his own, which he reads out now and then to the extreme discomfort of every man or woman of feeling. I fear I have taken up too much space already in describing the disease. The causes are, among others, the following :—Want of moral *tone*; promiscuous living, that is, the whole family living in one house, and at times in the same room; want of honest or healthy occupation; evil custom; backward state of woman; and fantastic ideas of wit. Of all these perhaps the most potent cause is the small esteem in which woman is held by the illiterate. Almost all odious epithets are levelled at her, and that, too, for no sin of hers.

Having indicated some of the causes, I now come to the question of treatment. For a social disease, a social remedy would of course be the best. All our clubs and other public places, therefore, would do well to proscribe indecent language, in light conversation or grave. I believe there *are* some clubs at which this vice is rigidly proscribed. But the evil is too widely extended to yield to individual or even class interference. Who will prevent the old man using indecent language at his hearth, or the priest indulging in the same luxury in

the temple? These may be left to some future caste legislator. Meantime, for the street nuisance an appeal to the Penal Code would not come amiss. Nothing less, I fear, can check the disease. The policeman is no doubt instructed to stop language which would lead to a breach of the public peace. But how is Baloo Sepoy or Govind Naik, who himself calls his neighbour's sister, mother or daughter all opprobrious names, to see any harm in an enlightened citizen abusing another? The root of the mischief lies here. The native policeman is useless for such delicate duties. And unless he is told that there is a great deal of harm in one man abusing another, that it is a public nuisance, that he, the policeman, is bound to protect the public from such indecent exhibitions, he will not move in the matter.

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S H E T T J A M Á L G O T Á , PHILANTHROPIST.

IN the course of my itinerary through Gujarrát I was never so much amused, and shocked, as when learning the particulars of an extraordinary character. The history of Khán Bahádur Jamál Gotá, J.P., may show, amongst other things, how certain native families have risen under the patronage of the Collector or the Cantonment Magistrate. Shett Jamál Gotá, I must explain, is an extreme case of oddity.

How HE ROSE.

Khán Bahádur Jamál Gotá is the only son and heir of his father by his "own mother," as he proclaims to the world. Jamál Gotá *pater* was an honest liquor shop-keeper at Charub. One Christmas Day he took a bottle of country-made *mowrá* to Colonel Buttercup, Cantonment Magistrate. The Colonel and his wife, Mrs. Millicent Buttercup, were at dinner with Collector Jalap, when Jamál Gotá approached the

presence, *saláming** repeatedly, with something like a bottle wrapped in a clean white napkin. Making his best bow to the company, Jamál unwrapped the bottle and placed it on the table; then folding his arms, as the Native does before his *Kebblá*, orated to this effect:—“Námdár Sirkar Sáheb, it is our custom to lay before such feet as yours (Buttercup had left one of his feet on the field of Assaye) the first fruits of the season. Hence the trouble, Lard Sáheb, for which give pardon, General Sáheb.” Buttercup, who neither relished the allusion to his absent foot nor the bottle in the presence of the strict Jalap, affected to be thunderstruck. After a gasp or two, he found coherent articulation enough to ask, “Are you mad, fellow? Who are you?” Jamál Gotá, who had come prepared, hereupon fell to the ground, sobbing as if his heart would break, and whining, “Oh, Sáheb, you are my *mábáp*. Is it not the duty of a son to keep his *mábáp khush*? Do what you like with it, but don’t give me back the bottle. Else I am a disgraced man.” Buttercup could not resist the force of such reasoning, and that on a Christmas Day. So he nodded to the suppliant, remarking by way of reward, “You old humbug! How can I be your

* Bowing obsequiously.

máábap? We shall suppose, for the fun of it, that I am your *báp*, but how can you make me out your *má*?—unless he means *you*, my dear,” whispered the wicked Buttercup, turning to his spouse. At this sally there was a great laugh. Jamál gathered strength, and offered to serve his *dáaroo** with his own hands. The request was granted. Jamál knew he had made his fortune. In less than a week he installed himself head butler. He stuck to his shop, too, but at dinner time he would be at the bungalow, with one novelty or other to provoke appetite. It need not be said that Jamál rose rapidly in importance. He was on confidential terms with Mrs. Colonel Buttercup, the people knew. She consulted him upon every concern. When there was cholera, Jamál would advise madam to fly to a distant village with her dear Colonel. And off they would go, leaving everything to Jamál. When they returned, Jamál would explain how he had burnt or buried the metal, wood, or other utensils at home, for fear these should retain the germ of the horrid disease. “What is money before your health, Sáheb?” The Buttercups were delighted with Jamál’s deep devotion. They made a contractor of Jamál, who in less than

* Wine.

four years rose to be the leading Shett of the town.

But as he grew in public importance he deteriorated in domestic virtues. Jamál found that his marriage with the present Mrs. Jamál Gotá was a mistake, that his only son and heir was also a mistake. They tried to humour him every way at home, but Shett Jamál was not to be reconciled. At last, "with the advice of friends and patrons," he took to him a second wife. Bigamy was no offence then; but the first Mrs. Jamál, whom, strange to say, her husband treated better after his second marriage, repaid his kindness by dying within three months. Young Jamál accused his father of having killed the old woman by *Jadoo*.* This was too much for Shett Jamálji, who swore that he had disinherited the "thief," and in a fit of passionate upbraiding, was carried off before he could make another will.

JAMÁL GOTÁ *Fils* AT HOME AND IN PUBLIC.

Come we now to the history of Jamál Gotá *Fils*, Justice of the Peace, Khán Bahádur, &c., &c. Young Jamál's first care was to look into

* The black arts.

the finances of the house. He ascertained that he was master of about five lakhs of rupees. He then counted how much he should spend every month, so as to leave a few thousands for his "brats," as he paternally called his sons. Having settled this point, he opened his campaign of luxury, dissipation, and waste. He pulled down house after house and built bungalows instead. He organised dinner parties and nautch* parties, and other immoral entertainments. He invited the *élite* of the town three times a week on one pretence or another. He took a Mehtá † in confidence, only bargaining that *he* should be supplied with what he wanted daily, the family to be reared with strict economy. He spent Rs. 1,000 one night on a party, and threatened the Mehtá with dismissal next morning for allowing to the family of eleven members, besides servants, Rs. 2 for bazaar expense. He denied that his family had any claim upon him. "Did they bring this money?", he asked of remonstrating friends. He kicked his wife and children, and abused them in the presence of his dancing girls. He married his children with great pomp, spending large sums on dinners and other parties, and then put down

* Dancing.

† Accountant.

double those sums against their names, explaining that each had already received his or her share of the inheritance, and that none should expect anything more. He, however, promised them their two meals a day, provided they behaved themselves. The boys, seeing no future, asked to be sent to school, though already fathers themselves. Shett Jamál hereupon complained that they wanted to dishonour him. Why should they go to school like poor people? Had they not every blessing of life—a generous parent, handsome wives, and a number of children? Was he not feeding them all? It was no use arguing with the man. The sons then went to the Collector who had made Jamál Gotá a Khán Bahádur, and said, “Sir, we are starving; give us to eat.” The Collector gave them respectable berths under him, asking them to learn soon to qualify themselves for the posts. When Shett Jamál heard of this he ran up to the Collector, took his turban off his head, put it at the Sáheb’s feet, unclasped his Khán Bahádur medal, and said, with tears in his eyes, “Sir, you made me Khán Bahádur; this great honour has given me a chair *beside Queen Victoria*; the sun smiles on me, the moon courts my smile: all this I owe to you. Now take away this honour and kill me. My

*abru** is all gone, and you, my own patron, have done this by making clerks of my sons. Oh! oh! Why did I live to see this day? What will the Queen say to this?"

"You old brute," replied the infuriated Collector, "you old, vicious, stinking brute! Had I known you were a drivelling idiot like this! Talking of Queen and sun and moon, when you have no more sense than my stable-boy! Here, remove this man; take him to the Magistrate; let him be bound over to keep peace towards his family," broke out the Collector, half laughing and relenting.

The butler was immediately sent with instructions to take the "beast" home, lest he should die of fright before the Magistrate whom he had so often fêted.

HIS DECLINE AND FALL.

Khán Bahádúr Jamál was *done for*. He took to his bed. He would see nobody (except his nautch girls). He would eat nothing (except sweetmeats). No, no; he had done with life, he explained. But he had still about a lakh of rupees left, safely invested by the Mehtá. He

* Reputation.

withdrew this sum, and left it with a Bombay firm which promised 12 per cent. interest. In about six months the firm broke, and it was with immense difficulty Jamál could get back about 40,000. This, with a couple of bungalows, is all that is now left to Khán Bahádur Jamál Gotá. He leads a retired life, away from his family, whom he has altogether discarded. But, indulgent father as he is, he has still "kept his sons' saláms"—that is, once a year his sons go to salám him from a distance, in the faint hope of getting a hundred or two from the unnatural wretch. Vain, vain is the hope. The father is a thief and a traitor, developing a degree of selfishness which is absolutely fiendish. And still he is an ornament of mofussil society! He is ever on the alert to catch the eye of the public. He presents a stable-house to the Anjuman,* and his charity is loudly praised. "Leaders of society" crowd at his dinners, call him a public benefactor, while at the same time they know that the imbecile, whose substance they are eating up like vultures, has a family literally starving—the sons going about from office to office for work which they have not been taught to perform, the daughters eking out a pre-

* Community.

carious existence by sewing and stitching, and the wife, the "lady of the house," daughter of a true gentleman, ending her days in sorrow and in suffering, aggravated by the cries of adults and infants of an ever-increasing family. And honest editors immortalise the virtues of Jamál Gotá, Esquire, Justice of the Peace, Khán Bahádur, "our great philanthropist," whom they know to have been an undutiful son, a wicked husband, an unnatural parent, a false friend, so worse than brutal in selfishness, that a very brute would have blushed for him had Jamál Gotá been assigned the place in creation which he so well deserves.

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HOME LIFE IN GUJARÁT.

A FEW details of domestic life in Gujarát may not be uninteresting. Let us begin with the beginning—birth. The birth of a child is, of course, an *event* in the family. Want of issue is felt as a curse and a reproach by the wife as well as the husband. No Hindu can enter *Swarga*, his heaven, who does not leave a son and heir in this world to perform the *post-mortem* ceremony named *Shráddha*. The Parsi is not quite free from this superstition. When conjugal life is unblest with issue, a thousand means are tried by the poor wife. She is not an honoured wife before she becomes a mother. She appeals to gods and goddesses without number to grant her prayer. Charlatans and impostors are not wanting to take advantage of her ignorance. It would fill a volume to record the adventures of a Hindu wife in search of offspring. Suffice it to say that the uneducated creature will stop at no means to get at the desired end. She is at peace when once the prize is secured, no matter how.

BOYHOOD.

Every care and comfort are lavished on the mother expectant. She who was a few months ago the most despised of the family, even less important than the servants, now finds herself real mistress of the house. As the time of trial and triumph approaches, a dinner party is given in her honour, at which, besides some insane rites, the poor woman has to put up with many a rabid joke and ribald song. Three days after the child is born the astrologer prepares its horoscope. The young mother's heart "bursts with happiness" as she listens to the astrologer's glib forecast of the child's career. If it is a boy, the baby is taken in hand by the grandparents, who transfer all their affection for their son to the infant. At an early age the boy has the *Janoi** ceremony performed upon him, which makes a real and responsible Hindu of him. The Parsi boy likewise has the *Kusti*† ceremony performed on him, and the Mahomedan undergoes *Sunnat*.‡

GIRLHOOD.

The girl is a heavy responsibility, and parents are always uneasy about her future. They

* The sacred thread.

† The triple cord.

‡ Circumcision.

anxiously look out for a suitable match, and as soon as they can they get rid of the dangerous possession. "A girl is best at her father-in-law's," says the native proverb, "as is the elephant at the Rájá's." Indeed, every parent looks upon a daughter as a "white elephant." Amongst the Hindus it is often very difficult to find suitable husbands in one caste and suitable wives in another.

MARRIAGE AMONG HINDUS.

Not only is intermarriage between two castes nearest in customs and rites prohibited, but marriage between two cousins of the remotest degree is sternly looked down upon. Such connection is incest, according to Hindu law. How rare a really happy marriage is can thus be conceived. And still, curious to say, a Hindu marriage seldom turns out *unhappy*. The credit of this is mainly due to the Hindu women. The evils of infant marriage are too numerous to be depicted in the course of a brief notice. Such unions often turn out uncongenial when the parties come of age—disparity is only to be expected. This means lifelong misery to one or to both. Then the married boy or girl has to pass through the ordeals of early life—small-pox, measles, and

so on, which may leave the patient deformed for life, if they do not carry him off. If it is the boy, his death leads to perpetual widowhood for the child-wife. But even if the world goes well with the little pair, they have to defer to rites and customs by no means compatible with social happiness. The boy may become a father while he is still struggling at school; he may have to leave school all too soon to eke out a miserable livelihood for himself and family. Hundreds of such cases have come under my notice of schoolboy-fathers looking and feeling old in youth and going down to the grave with the burden of life too heavy to bear. Who is to take care, in each case, of the widow and the orphans? And the girl-wife fares worse than the boy-husband. She is a mother at 11 or 12. Her beauty of person and strength of mind may fail her at 25, and before 30 she may become old.

PARSI MARRIAGE.

Parsis, too, cannot marry out of caste; but there is an incipient revolt at work against this ruling, and several daring youths have taken unto them fair European brides. This, however, happens in rare instances, and it is not at all desirable, I believe.

But the Parsi can marry his cousin—even first cousins marry. In fact, such alliance is always preferred. To such an extent is this practice of “breeding in and in” carried by certain families, that the results have told disastrously on the progeny. Eminent medical men have strongly condemned this practice. Of one European doctor, high up in the profession, it is said that he was once called to the side of a young Parsi lady in trouble. The new comer was so slow in coming, that the mother’s life was at one time despaired of. But at last she came. Her grand-father, a very wealthy merchant, looking at the tiny little babe, small enough to make a morsel for man or beast, asked the doctor very plaintively how it was that his grandchildren were so very diminutive and often deformed. The doctor is said to have replied, “My dear sir, if you keep up the practice of marrying cousins, I will not be surprised if, ten years hence, you get babies no better than half-formed ourang-outangs”! And no mistake. Too much of cousin-marriage has given us not a few ourang-outangs in physique as well as in intellect.

The Parsi is a monogamist; not so the Hindu and the Mahomedan. Polygamy ob-

tains amongst the very highest circles or the very lowest.

A friend of mine has a *Dhobi* (a washerman), a low class Hindu, who has six wives. Being asked one day what a poor man like he could do with so many connubial luxuries, the man explained, that he had originally married only one wife, of his own caste, that she was his queen-wife, and she attended to his personal wants. The second wife, he explained, he had married for mere convenience, and so also the other four. The first looked after his kitchen, the second and third earned money for the whole family, the fourth was intended for perpetuation of his race ; she having failed, the fifth was taken in, and the sixth came as her sister ! All save the first were of lower castes than himself, and besides paying him in money for his condescension in marrying them, besides working for him like slaves, they felt honoured and happy ! He did literally nothing, he continued with a horrid leer, except going to customers on pay-day. Not a bad idea !

MARITAL TRAVESTIES.

Marriages, both among Parsis and Hindus, especially the latter, are often very strange

perpetrations. I read sometime ago a graphic account of a marriage recently perpetrated at Poona. The happy bridegroom had just entered on his fifth year when he took to him the blooming bride of two-and-a-half. The parties concerned seemed to have taken the matter very lightly ; so much so, that to the outsider the ceremony seemed to have been performed between the two parents who stood sponsors, and to whom the usual query, "Dost thou take him or her as thy lawful," &c., was addressed by the priest. The bridal preparations were complete to a degree—the groom was turned out in all the bravery of the *toga virilis* and a huge sugar-loaf turban, whilst of the bride nothing could be recognised save the blinking eyes and the cry for milk from under her heap of *trousseau*. It was a Parsi marriage, and indicates the march of progress characteristic of a highly advanced people. Such "marriages" are now extremely rare among Parsis.

MARRIAGES AMONG KUDWÁ KUNBIS.

Perhaps the strangest form of this kind of "marriage" obtains amongst the Kudwá Kunbis of Gujarát, a well-to-do class of cultivators. The "season" for marriage among the Kudwás occurs only once in twelve years, when all

marriages are settled after consulting *Mátá*, the tutelary goddess. Among these are adult marriages, child marriages, infant marriages, and marriages in the womb. The last-mentioned are highly amusing arrangements, in which the mothers expectant undergo the preliminaries. Many curious results attend these marital travesties; but the national instinct is equal to all extraordinary occasions. For instance, if the "married mothers" both give birth to girls or boys, these are looked upon as sisters or brothers, and the previous marriage is annulled. The marriage is held good only in case of one of the births being a boy, the other a girl. And in this case neither disease nor deformity, nor any physical inadaptability stands in the way of the validity of the marriage contract. Who will say, after this, that the Hindu mind is not saturated with a sense of rich and grotesque humour? Of this marriage *in embryo*, and its results, I have culled an account from several curious manuscripts, in prose and verse, that came to hand during my travels. Many of the quaint incidents recorded in my idyl were witnessed personally by Hindu friends, some of whom have gone through the experiences.

AN ARYAN IDYL.

Motichand Zaver and Kastur Pitámber were merchant princes. They were castemen, neighbours, and friends; each was called the very "nose" of Ahmedábád society. Mrs. Moti and Mrs. Kastur were also sisters.* Many a friendly chat had the two Shetts† together, chewing *pán supári* and congratulating each other on the success of the week's operations. Many also were the meetings between the two Shethánis,‡ who went to the Gorji together, and often examined each other's heads to detect vermin (an unfailing sign of bosom friendship). One afternoon, as Bái Devkore was looking into Bái Shámkore's locks, she pinched the latter's cheek and chid her for not having acquainted her "own sister" with an interesting secret she had only then discovered by accident.

"Sister," said Devkore, "thy heart is not clear like mine. Did I not tell thee, without asking, that I was six months gone? How far art thou?"

Then replied the modest Shámkore, "Oh, sister Devkore, I was so ashamed, you would

* In affection.

† Leading wealthy citizens.

‡ Wealthy matrons.

go on joking and teasing. You have done it so often—you have four already. I am five months gone, and it will be a boy, I know."

"I'll have a girl," replied the impetuous Shámkore. "What say you to a match, sister mine?"

"Oh! sister," replied the younger friend, "it will be an honour to our family; I'll ask my This (husband)."

That night Shámkore's This saw Devkore's This, and in less than a week the mothers-expectant were "married" in right Shráwak fashion.

"It is a splendid stroke, my dear," said the uxorious Kastur to his young wife one night. "That hog [his friend Moti] is worth a plum."

But unluckily for them, both gave birth to girls. This was a sore disappointment, but it was overcome by the device that the next male birth should wed the promised bride. It was four years before Mrs. Kastur presented her lord with a thing which the midwife declared would be a boy by-and-bye. Unfeigned were the rejoicings thereupon, not so much at Kastur's house as at Shett Motichand's. Mrs.

Moti was wild with joy. "O sister mine! I feel as if I had done it, I so badly want the little rogue; my poor Mánkore (the promised bride) is growing so fast."

Time flies. Mánkore is now sixteen, her boy-husband is nearing twelve. Mánkore looks older than her age by at least five years. Devchand, her husband, looks nine at most. He is short, dull, consumptive. She is the reverse. But is she not his promised bride? The families now live away from each other; but the wife is informed of her husband's rapid progress, physical and mental. Mánkore is "bursting" with youth and hope; she is already a *moogdha*,* her season of leafage is over; her wise mother has already disclosed to her enraptured gaze the mysteries of wife-hood. "Oh dear, how I long to meet my lord. I am more eager for his company than is the pea-hen for rain drops. Indeed, indeed, I must be married, mother." And married she was.

Mánkore's heart died within her when, after all these years, she beheld her lord. Her fancy had pictured another form altogether. But she would not repine. Like the true

* Mature.

Hindu girl she was, she would consecrate her life to rendering his happy.

“He is little, he is ignorant, he is ugly; but is he not my wedded lord? I’ll give him my own health, my own knowledge, my own beauty. *Bhugwán** will help a virtuous wife. O Prabhu! O Párasnáth! make me ugly and ignorant, and give the gifts ye have given me to my dear lord. I’ll cherish him in my heart, I’ll soothe him in my arms, I’ll kiss him into glorious manhood; I’ll be a motherly wife unto him.”

So reasoned Mánkore, and so she vowed. The wedding ceremonies are over; the bridal party disperse; the bridegroom is taken into his room. An hour later the bride follows. All is hushed. With a light step Mánkore enters the magnificent apartment, mirrored all round, with the sandalwood bedstead, its silk and satin trappings, its gold and silver posts, its lovely curtains. But she heeds not all these tinsel effects. The “life” of all this beauty is her lord, and he is—SNORING! There is no ecstasy of impatience on his part. Devchand sleepeth the sleep of the innocent. Mánkore sees this and sighs. But her love for the

miserable little creature is supremely unselfish. She feasts her eyes on the object which, under other circumstances, she could not have too strongly loathed. She lays herself down gently on the floor. Oh, the horrors of this bridal night! "The water of despair extinguishes the fire of my love, but I'll venture." Gently she nears the bed, and looking around, all fearful, she touches his feet. They are so clammy! Then, overpowered by an undefinable feeling—pity, loneliness, despair—she attempts to ravish a chaste wifely kiss from the slumbering bride-groom. But unused to this osculatory exercise, the boy half awakes and sets up a shriek: "Oh, *má!** oh, *bápá!*† come, come! some strange woman is biting my lips! ‡ oh *má!* she is gagging my mouth! oh, she is breaking my legs! oh, oh, oh!" There is a rush into the room. The poor fainting bride is removed gently to another room by the mother-in-law. There is wondrous sympathy between these two women. The little Sheth Devchand is soothed to slumber by promise of a long holiday from school and the Bhaiaji § sleeping in his room to prevent further intrusion from the "strange woman."

* Mother.

† Father.

‡ Devchand has forgotten all about the marriage.

§ Gate-keeper.

And thus ends my Aryan Idyl: what followed is only known to the chief actors. The Gorji tried to improve his opportunity. But Mánkore is not like others. She can only cry in corners, read Karsandás Mulji's *Moral Essays*, pray to her "True God." She is very gently treated; her parents are gone, her husband is *going*. He cannot last over a few years more. She waits upon her lord. "I am his handmaid, and I pray that he may live; I am quite happy," she reasons falsely. "Let him only live—he must survive me. Is he not my lord? What he can't give me *here* he'll give me *there*, surely—I have learned that much." Poor child, poor child! What a wealth of faith and hope is thine! Widow of a living imbecile, amidst trials and temptations, surrounded by sin and sorrow, thou art pure of heart—a virgin immaculate! But thou canst not hide it from thyself that custom and the folly of parents have blighted thy life. May none of thy sisters realise *thy* fate!

EXPERIENCES OF A NEWLY-MARRIED PARSI.

An odd marriage is not a rarity among Parsis, too, as I have said—it may be odd in various ways. Here are the experiences, of a mixed character, of my friend Ookerji. Any

honest Parsi can vouch for the facts, though I very much doubt if he will like to be identified as the "happy" bridegroom.

Last week I was dined by my mother-in-law. Mother-in-law is a well-endowed widow who keeps her own accounts and her own counsels. I hail from Panch Kaliani, a small possession of Nawáb Khudá Bux of Mowlághar. I was an orphan before I was born ; so one might well doubt my existence. But fact is a stern thing, and so is mother-in law, to whom at once I must return. Well, the dinner was in honour of my marrying mother-in-law's only daughter. It was an "affair of the heart,"—had not mother-in-law set her heart on it ? And when she sets her heart, or head, or hand, or foot on anything, there is small hope of resistance, you may be sure. Our union was arranged for just after the fury of the Share Mania had subsided into bankruptcy and suicide. One day father-in-law "was not." So mother-in-law came to Panch Kaliani, a woe-begone widow to all appearance, but with small effects of large value hidden in many odd corners of her capacious motherly person. I distinctly remember this visit. My old aunt received her, and a little girl trotting behind her, at the threshold

I was busy eating my meal of Indian corn, but instinctively made out that the little girl was her daughter and my destiny. They lived with us for about a year, during which time our troths were plighted. Shortly after my poor old aunt died, leaving me and her neat little fortune to mother-in-law's care. We then came up to Bombay, where mother-in-law at once set up for a rich widow with no desire to become a woman again. She put us both to cheap schools where we were happier than at home. Mother-in-law had a horror of over-feeding us, and whenever we cried from hunger she would remind us of the day when we would be wedded and free. And, in very sooth, she was making grand preparations for the day, and the repeated threat was, "The wedding once over, I'll lay down my aching bones in peace." This was an empty boast, for, as far as could be gathered from a respectful distance, the doctor was of opinion that her constitution was not predisposed to generating much ossific substance. But I see the reader is looking out for a picture of mother-in-law. Well, she was no meet subject for a poetic pen. Horizontally and perpendicularly she measured the same. She had a fine head of hair, which grew in rank luxuriance, shooting out their delicate

downy germs on the fallow surface of her facial region, notably on the upper lip and chin. In voice and manners she was more mannish than is usual. So much for mother-in-law. As to her daughter, I am not the man to betray what is in my safe keeping.

HOW THE MARRIAGE WAS MANAGED.

Well, mother-in-law worked for a successful wedding business, as I said. She set apart Rs. 5,000 for one day's expenses. She got invitation cards printed in red and blue, commencing with a brief history of her house, mentioning the names of parties to be married and concluding with an invitation to the recipient and "all with you"—meaning your whole family including the ayás,* hamáls,† and even the next-door neighbour. Those invitation cards mother-in-law got liberally distributed by Parsi priests, who have, not a few of them, taken leave of their priestly calling, but who make excellent dry-nurses, match-makers, waiters, and errand-boys. Well, well, the day came, and with the crowing of the cock we started for the wedding-hall. Three hundred cushioned chairs were scattered over the spacious grounds, while the hall inside was being

* Women attendants.

† Men house-servants.

swept and scoured. That day must have cost mother-in-law ten years of her life. She lived in an acute agony of hope and fear. Would the day go off well? One local magnate would send word that he could not join because his wife was ill; and away would go poor mother-in-law to the stubborn dame, coax, cajole, and bribe her into gracing the occasion. In some instances, she says, she positively bought brilliant silk dresses for ladies who did not care to disgrace their families by appearing in the garments their husbands could afford! By 4 P.M. visitors commenced pouring in. We were now asked to go and purify ourselves—myself and the bride. This is done by repeating sundry prayers said by the priest, drinking a glass of *niranga*,* and taking an oath. A rupee to the priest had changed the *niranga* into palatable *eau de vie*. On dressing we were seated side by side, and the high priest approached with a high-and-mighty gait. One of these holy men managed to treat upon some plantain bark. I dare not describe the result, but that evening another priest had to officiate for Dastur Banámeijad. We were soon married, and then mother-in-law came to wash my feet, according to custom. The five minutes

* Cow urine.

occupied by this ceremony were to me an age. I was in such fear of having the foot disjoined.

I was now led to a seat outside between two venerable guests, and took a leisurely survey of the assembly. Most of the guests were Parsis, but there were some Mussalmans, Hindus and Portuguese. How these latter gentlemen came to know our family is still a mystery to me ; but mother-in-law is certain they were representatives of Government. As far as I could guess, one of them was Dr. De Lucha, the Sonápore apothecary, and the other Mr. Annunciation, the undertaker. But each had a cocoanut and a nosegay in his hand, and that means they were welcome guests. I have no time to speak of the dresses of ladies and gentlemen, and of the exquisite music the former discoursed alternately with the Portuguese band.

But here's how we dined on the occasion. The guests sat at table instead of squatting on the floor, each having before him a fresh plantain leaf. On this leaf the waiter served the dinner—about two dozen little dainties from sugar, *ghee* and plantain, up to cake, custard, and cream. It was beautiful to see the liquid *ghee* meandering through the viands and mak-

ing friendly overtures to the coat and trousers of the diner, while the oil-lamp was flickering from nervous exhaustion. It was beautiful to see how the dinner was eaten in big rounded balls of mixed viands—the rice, *dál* and plantain first, and then the solids and substantials by way of dessert. The toasting, too, was beautiful to witness. How the health of deceased ancestors was first drunk, then the health of remote descendants, and, oftener than was necessary, of the living worthies of the community. The toasts were proposed by professional toasters, sometimes by friends of the host and sometimes by the waiters. Have you seen the dirtiest chimney-sweep of London? Well, then, the average Parsi waiter *beats* him. There is not one white speck to relieve the dread darkness of his appearance. A cold shiver runs through your body as you see the waiter stalking out of the kitchen and serving the pudding or custard with his five dirty fingers.

The Parsi waiter is only next in harrowing associations to the Parsi corpse-bearer. There is a subtle sympathy between the two wretches, which the student of nature can easily account for.

NATIVE SINGING.

The art of singing is highly developed among the Hindus of Gujarát as elsewhere, but it is not "proper" for a lady or gentleman to sing or play in company. Hence it has been monopolised by dancing girls and other professional hirelings in whose hands a noble art has degenerated into an ignoble trade. Professional singers are engaged by gentlemen during holidays or festivals. Some of these are, no doubt, honest men and women, but, as a rule, the nautch girl puts her art, as she often puts her person, to the basest use. And yet, Hindu gentlemen and ladies, and Parsi and Mahomedan, too, for that matter, see nothing wrong in the hired dance-song.

At home it is incumbent on every Hindu—man or woman—to sing a few snatches of devotional music at stated hours. But the singer's heart is not in the song. I have heard some beautiful devotional music in Gujarát, especially among the mendicant class, with simple but exquisite accompaniments. In not a few points such natural music surpasses the strained European art. Hindu women also sing what we call season songs, at times siting, at times in a circular dance, with rhythmic hand-clap-

ping. There is music to celebrate birth, marriage, &c. Much of it is good and wholesome, tinged with religious ideas, with superstitions, and at times demoralising associations. But whatever the state of music in the province, the Hindu of Gujarát is essentially a musical animal.

What I say above of Hindu music applies in a degree to Parsi and Mahomedan music. Parsi women sing very much after their Hindu sisters from whom they have borrowed the modes as well as the words. But they often make a hash of the whole thing for want of appreciation. To a stranger orthodox Parsi singing sounds a dreary monotone, a a ra, e e re, o o ro, u u ru : ma ra ma a a a re e e e an endless array of vowels unintelligible save now and then for a glimpse of sense which reveals a curious medley of ideas—*ghee*, sugar, gold, silver, sun, moon, flower, and so on. The orthodox Parsi gentleman will not sing or play to save his head—that is, not to please another. He may whistle or hum when the dinner is to his taste, or he may thump a favourite air when he has done a stroke of business, but generally he is content with the band-stand drumming or the gallop of

the dancing girl. The younger generation, boys and girls, are already taking to improved methods, though, to my mind, they lean too much to the European side. Playing on the piano and the organ has passed the stage which the heartless male critic calls "grinding." But it has to be improved a good deal. Schools and clubs can do much in this direction, but an honest effort has yet to be made by society. Great credit is due to individual amateurs, notably to Mr. K. N. Kabraji, who has given years to the cultivation of the art and to making it popular and respectable among his community. Like Hindus, Parsis have a rich literature of devotional music, but unlike other nations—be it said to the Parsis' shame—they never sing sacred music either at home or at church.

Mahomedans, too, indulge more or less in hired singing. But often in the privacy of domestic life a wife or a mother sings and plays with very rare taste and effect. The group of amateurs—wife, husband and children—make a picture of luxury and ease to be seldom met with in the country; nor does the music lack the dignity of art. Mussalmans make capital singers and singing masters. The

best known on this side is Professor Maula Bux who ought to give me a song next time he meets me, and a song such as I may reproduce for European lovers of the art.

DEATH.

Parsis and Hindus make a merit of removing the dead for final disposal with the least possible delay. Parsis are not so particular as Hindus, but both realise equally well the value of this excellent sanitary rule. The more orthodox carry the patient to the ground-floor while the "vital spark" is struggling to escape, and after a bath, they administer to him the consolations of his faith. No sight could be more affecting; none more *inhuman* in some circumstances. No wonder if a delicate sufferer at times goes off in the act of removal, either from exertion or sheer fright. If he survives the bath he is laid upon a bed-stead; otherwise the body is stretched full length on a slab, with a light by its side. The priest is always at hand; so also the "Sag," the watch-dog. This reminds one as a relic of the ancient rite when the most faithful of domestic pets watched by the side of its deceased master on the mountain's top, till, in good time, it was itself laid to rest. What wonder if the Parsis

cherish the dog more than any other nation? Now follow ceremonies--a *posse* of priests offering prayers for the spirit just disembodied, female friends surrounding the body on a mattress or a carpet, and male friends sitting on benches outside. The principal mourners inside recount, one by one, in a dismal and depressing monotone, the merits of the deceased, his private relations, his successes in life, &c., winding up now and then with a covert hit at an obnoxious sister, or brother, and very often the relations-in-law. The challenge may be taken up by the person thus treated or by her friends, and a retort is averted by friendly intercession. Many of the distant relatives keep up a mournful sing-song by way of interlude, I suppose, beating the breast and otherwise exhibiting grief--the refrain of the dirge being "Oh mother mine O! oh sister mine O! oh father mine O!" according to circumstances. There is genuine feeling in what is said and done, but not so in all cases. Outside the room the bereaved ones are busy arranging for the funeral and bowing to friends as they drop in. These male mourners are the greatest bores--they pass nearly two hours in discussing the latest scandals, in drinking iced water, taking snuff and otherwise behaving in a most callous

manner. The more sensible ones pass the time in silent prayer. Meantime the body is being dressed in old linen, and placed on the iron bier on which it is to be carried to the Tower of Silence. Two ordained priests now stand up at the threshold and offer prayers, part of them appropriate enough, but the rest mere recitation of sanitary rules. These warnings against the danger of contact with the dead are admirable in their way, though uttered in ancient Zend; but they are no more of the nature of devotional recitations than are chapters from our Sanitary Commissioner's Report. After the "prayers" are over, the mourners take their last farewell of the friend, and form themselves into a procession to follow him to his resting-place. The body is removed amidst outbursts of grief. Only a few of the mourners follow the dead body carried by professional carriers. The procession, though orderly, is by no means edifying. There are more rites and ceremonies for days, weeks, months, up to the first anniversary. This depends upon the means of the survivors, and their gullibility. Death may be a rich harvest to the Parsi priest, but it often means an unbearably heavy bill to the bereaved.

The Hindus follow more or less the rites above mentioned. They are more rigid in the observance than are Parsis. They hurry off the dead to the burning-ground in cruel haste, be it night or day, (Parsis never remove the dead after sunset), and it is terrible to be disturbed of a quiet night by the cries of *Rama bolo*. The female mourners in this case are more violent, many of them abandoned to grief for the hour, standing in a circle, beating the breast and singing the virtues of the deceased friend or relative. The sight is very pathetic, but because of its being so common, and because the mourning song is gone through in the streets, and because mourners are often hired for the occasion, it has lost much of its weird pathos. The relatives no doubt suffer keenly—the poor widow is worse than dead on the husband's death. The Hindus have their *post-mortem* ceremonies like all Eastern nations—the *shrádha* being the most important. The *shrádha* is based on a beautiful idea. Nothing could be more touching than a son recounting the trials and troubles of a mother, acknowledging his life-long obligations to her, and imploring his God to give rest to her spirit for her own good, pure, devoted life, and through his humble pious intercession. I believe the

ceremony is a powerful domestic discipline. But among the unreasoning mass it also leads to extravagance and ruin. The survivors have to give caste-dinners. And in some cases these dinners cost more than the parties can afford. But being a compulsory institution, no decent man can avoid giving the dinner. It is dreadful to think of an old man giving up his everything in order to feed the Caste on the death of a beloved son or daughter ! Here we see Caste in the character of a cannibal.

The Mahomedans manage a funeral much better. There is no hurry or bustle. The body is carried on friendly shoulders which change every few minutes as passers-by meet the procession and claim the honour of carrying the deceased. Prayers are shouted all the way, sometimes perhaps more loudly than is necessary. But the rest of the business is as quiet and dignified as I should like to have at my own funeral.

DEATH—ITS EFFECTS ON THE LIVING.

In dealing, though very cursorily with such a solemn subject as life, it would not be well to omit death, its twin-brother. Death is not a stranger to us ; but he is never a welcome

guest. And by none is a visit from him so much dreaded as by the Hindu wife. The death of her husband is a crushing blow to her ; she cannot recover from its effects. The Hindu widow is doomed to wearing life long weeds. The widow is not treated like a human being. Her look is "inauspicious," her touch pollutes everything. Despised, neglected, and often betrayed by the wolves of society, her woman's life often becomes a burden to her. She has nothing for it but either to abandon her pure womanhood to impure customs, or to drag on her miserable solitary sojourn to the bitter end, often reached long before it is time. I am here speaking of the YOUNG HINDU WIDOW—she who has all her life before her. The widow who has the consolation of children left to her is not so completely at the mercy of caste and custom. Indeed, the widow with grown-up boys does not think she is to be so much pitied as her neighbour who has been left alone. Of such widows my bold but unhappy heroine, Moghi Thakrani,* is a notable instance. Let her speak out in her own way.

* Wife of a Bhattia, also of a Rajput prince.

CONFESSIONS OF MOGHI THAKRANI.

A Chapter of Lapses, Relapses and Collapses.

“My father married late in life—after his forty-eighth year. My mother was then about twelve. She looked old for her age, my aunt Kevli tells me. My father was really old, having led a laborious and irregular life; but he had hoarded money, with which he bought my mother. She made a devoted wife. He, too, was kind to her in his own way. Three years after the marriage my mother gave me life and lost hers in the attempt. My father mourned her truly, but his grief was selfish and arbitrary. What grieved him was not so much her death, as her not having left him a son and heir. My father loved and was very proud of me. He would not part with me under Rs. 50,000, he used to say. That was his love! I remember my youth from six years upwards. At this age I was first taken to the Mahárāja's Mandir. My aunt and several of my cousins came with me. Up to nine I worshipped the Maháráj at a distance; but after my marriage with an old man I was initiated into the sacred rites of Maháráj worship. My father as well as my husband did not know, or rather pretended not to know,

of my dedication to the Source of True Bliss. On the day of our visit my aunt decked me out in the best of clothes and richest of ornaments, murmuring softly all the while, Thou lucky little rogue, thy life will be blessed to-day. And thus fell upon my life the cruelest blight that could befall womanhood. I would not have the heart to wish such a curse to fall upon my deadliest foes. After my dedication I went to live with my husband. He was an old man, with many of the infirmities of age—he was deaf and colour-blind for two things, and made dreadful mistakes through jealousy. I had scarcely been with him for three months when an undesirable acquaintance sprang up between me and an opposite neighbour. I made very light of the sin, and so we lived on for about six months. The knowledge no way interfered with my happiness. But soon came its punishment. The Brahmin cook, learning of it, looked bold, and threatened exposure when I disregarded his importunities. It is impossible to deny favours which are asked as a price for secrecy. Next year I presented my husband with an heir, who died in a few weeks. The old man himself died soon after.”

“I now entered on a career of what we call widow’s freedom. When inconveniently situat-

ed, I would organise pilgrimages to holy shrines, whither I would go with half-a-dozen wives and maidens, accompanied by two or three servants."

Let me now give a few instances of the sad results of caste. A man being strictly forbidden to marry out of caste, and eligible girls being very few, he has to pass the best years of his life in low intrigues for the acquirement of money and the gratification of sense. He is often a wreck at the time of his marriage, and makes an indifferent guardian for what is his exclusively. After a few years of such marital foolery, the husband dies. What becomes of the young widow, or what she makes of herself, I need scarcely explain.

On the other hand, when the wife dies first, leaving a son of, say, ten years, the father gets for him a bride of thirteen or fifteen. There may be a double object in view. He cannot marry again if he is a poor man. He will have sooner or later to bring a wife for the son ; so he resorts to this stratagem. Such arrangements must be very rare. The re-marriage of widows, and permission to marry one degree out of caste, would do away with practices the infamy

of which attaches to many sections of uneducated Hindus.

WOES OF THE HINDU WIDOW.

A case of infanticide at Jetpur was reported the other day. A "high caste" widow, long suspected by the Police and closely watched, gives birth to a child. The new-comer's mouth is immediately stuffed with hot kitchen ashes. Thus "religiously disposed of" and thrust into a basket of rubbish, his loving grandmother deposits the child into the nearest river. The village Police THEN come to know about it.

A very similar case is reported from Veeramgaum; high caste widow, new-born babe, and hot ashes, though no mention is made of the loving grandmother or the basket of rubbish. Three persons are implicated in the former case. It must be remembered that the mother is very seldom a party to the "act of merit." After all, it is her child, flesh of her flesh. Woman's love shines best under trials. The wife of a thief or murderer will cling to him all the closer the more he is shunned by the world; the mother of a bastard will love him more intensely, perhaps, to make up for the father's neglect

In the Jetpur widow's case, I may say, she is no more a murderer than is the head of the local Police. The father of her unclaimed child, whom your humane English law never thinks of calling to account, is the prime mover, with the widow's parents and Caste people as his accomplices. So cleverly is the affair managed that hardly one case out of twenty can be detected. In most cases the child dies before birth. The patient is removed far from her home, on a visit to a friend's or on a pilgrimage, and there she is absolved of the burden of sin. She is lucky if she escapes with permanent injury to the system, for the village surgeon is but a clumsy operator. If less lucky, she succumbs under the operation. But least lucky is the widow whose case does not yield to the manipulations of the *Dai*.* And woe be to her if she belongs to a respectable family. Then they get up a ceremony in her honour, what they call a *cold Suttee*, they serve her with the best of viands, they ply her with sweet intoxicants, and they cap her last supper on earth with something that will settle the business. The widow is soon a *cold Suttee*, and is forthwith carried off to the burning-ground (the pious Hindu can't keep a corpse in his

* Midwife.

house for ten minutes). This cold *Suttee* means a double murder. Let us hope it is now out of vogue. But a case is known where the widow suspected foul play in the midst of the nocturnal festivities in her honour. She turned piteously to her mother and asked to be saved, but she was urged in reply somewhat to this effect :—" Drink, drink, my child, drink to cover thy mother's shame and to keep thy father's *abru*; drink it, dear daughter, see I am doing likewise "!

As for the village policeman, he is too stupid, as a rule, to be of any use. And where he is less stupid than his brother, he makes up by that low cunning and duplicity which render him so dangerous to the community. He is open to corruption in any form, and where Caste conflicts with duty, he is to be least trusted. He bullies the weak and the helpless. With the powerful and the well-to-do your policeman is always reasonable. But what can the policeman do even where he is intelligent as well as honest? The lapse of a widow is no offence in the law; the Magistrate has no right to inquire how a widow came to be in the family way. It is only when abortion is feared that a sort of watch is kept upon the widow. The Magistrate receives anonymous petitions.

Many of these he does not attend to; but where the petition appears *bona fide*, the Magistrate forwards it to the Police authorities. Even such a case is not looked upon as a pressing one, and I think wisely. Delays being frequent, the Police are unable to prove five cases of abortions out of a hundred.

The only remedy is to dispossess Caste of its power of excommunicating the widow who marries again. Government sanctions re-marriage and Caste opposes it. What a position for the Government of an Empire? It is all very well for English officials to say that the widow and her friends ought to defy Caste. They do not know the terrible effect of the Mahajan's curse. The widow and her husband, and very often her and his families are shunned like pariahs. Thus some forty people may suffer for the courage of two. They suffer in life and in death. No casteman joins them in any domestic ceremony; none of them can take part in the social affairs of any casteman. So cruelly rigid is the discipline, that it drew tears of anguish from that most patient Hindu martyr, Kursandas Mulji. He used to cry helplessly when his wife wanted to know *when her family was to be re-admitted into the Caste*. Englishmen can have no idea of the bitterness of this social seclusion;

it is worse than the bitterness of death. One result of the persecution is that few remarried couples live happily. They are hunted out of Caste, out of profession, and if I am not quite wrong, out of part of their inheritance. And not being sufficiently educated to take to new modes of life, husband and wife pine away in despair, accuse each other of folly, and under a sense of injury they sometimes take to evil courses. What a triumph for Caste? That the widow marriage movement in India is making head in spite of such crushing opposition is a proof of its necessity and its ultimate triumph. If the Government only rules that Caste has no right to prevent re-marriage; if the Public Prosecutor is instructed to lay heavy damages against the Mahajan for putting a re-married widow out of Caste, the reform will have an easy victory over prejudice. Is there no Englishman to put down this unnatural interference with a movement sanctioned by the law of God and man? Is there no Englishwoman to plead for the rights of her voiceless sisters in India?

GOVERNMENT AND THE HINDU WIDOW.

It is really surprising that the enlightened British Government, which considers it a para-

mount duty to put down any practice tending to conflict with public interests, should hang back in a matter like the prevention of widow marriage, which leads directly to heinous offences against society and against nature, culminating in almost daily murders. The *Gujarati*, which is generally opposed to any form of State interference in the social affairs of the people, is convinced that the evil cannot be put down except by the strong hand of authority. In such matters the orthodox Hindu is as perverse to-day as he was ever before. Of himself he will effect no reform, however imperative. He has always refused to move with the times, and it can be historically proved that without legislative interference, either under the Hindu, the Mahomedan or the British Government, Caste would never have made even the little progress that may now be laid to its credit. For instance, had not Lord Bentinck boldly legislated against Suttee, threatening offenders with capital punishment, that national crime would not have disappeared. He might have preached against the crime for a thousand years without effect. It is action taken by the authorities that tells upon Hindu society. A howl may be set up now, as it was set up in that case, if Government attempts interference.

But the opposition will not be so fierce as before—which Lord Bentinck's Government stood easily enough. There is greater general enlightenment now ; three-fourths of the Hindu population, if not more, are anxious to see re-marriage guaranteed freedom from priestly persecution. And is not Government bound to consult the happiness of the many, even at the risk of offending the few ? It is folly to expect the Hindus to work out the reform for themselves. Where man can exercise his free will in every concern, and woman is stigmatised as 'a creature of circumstances,' can we expect justice for woman ?

For these and other reasons the *Gujarati* urges that Government should call upon grown-up widows without children, who are not likely to withstand temptations, to show cause why they may not marry and what prevents them doing so. Such an arrangement will have two salutary results ; re-marriage of widows will be forced to come into fashion, and infant marriage will be put a stop to. May this be so !

A BRAHMIN WIDOW ADVERTISING FOR A HUSBAND.

What will the English reader think of a Brahmin widow advertising for a husband ? In

England, where the courting is done all by the young men, except perhaps in the *agony* columns, such a thing as a Hindu widow offering public court to a possible husband may appear incredible. But here is a young and fairly educated Brahmin widow bidding for a partner—a deliverer from lifelong misery and worse—with an income of only Rs. 50 a month. As a rule, the Hindu maiden never responds to love's appeal except by a shy glance. And here we have a case—well, it won't do to dwell upon it. But what are we to think of the so-called "men" of India when its women are driven to such straits in a matter with which the honour and the very growth of the nation is so intimately connected? What are we to think of the twice-born Brahmins, of our enlightened reformers and patriots? So long as her fair daughters are at the mercy of a foul superstition so long will a curse hang upon the country.

And will the poor girl find a husband from among the Brahmin class? I doubt it. There may be B.A.s and M.A.s and no end of patriotic reformers ready with a speech or a pamphlet on "the regeneration of Aryavrat." But the minute it comes to action, they fly from the

field like timid bulls with their tails set on fire. Or, there may be enemies in the camp scaring away applicants by reflections on the character of the widow. But as this widow has gone so far, why won't she go a step further and accept a suitable Khshatri or Vaishya husband? A decent Vaishya is better than a degenerate Brahmin, even though the latter be a B A., LL.B.

THE THRALDOM OF CASTE —ITS APPROACHING
END.

Oh Caste ! what havoc hast thou wrought in Gujarát and elsewhere in the name of religion and under the sanction of antiquity ! We have been thy slaves for centuries—and no slaves so abject as we Gujarátis, no tyrant so absolute as thou, cruel, cruel Caste ! But thy days seem to be numbered. Yes, the reign of King Caste must draw to a close. Nature, the sovereign controller of affairs, is already asserting her supremacy ; and though it may be years perhaps whole decades, before the rightful sovereign resumes her sway, I doubt not that Caste, in his more hateful aspects, is retreating. Twenty years ago, the re-marriage of a Hindu widow was an event not to be dreamt of. In the course of last year I have recorded fifty such

unions. The bold spirits, who defy Caste in order to save their honour and secure the happiness to which instinct tells them they are entitled, have to put up with bitter persecution, even personal violence from bigots in power ; but the eye of an All-wise Providence watches over the victims. The time is coming when, sanctified by Him, and blessed by all sensible Gujarátis, widow remarriage will grow up an institution of the land. Meanwhile, the following account of the Caste meeting may afford some cue to the observant reader as to the knowledge and power for good of the representatives of Caste, and the attitude of the advocates of reform. The proceedings are conducted in a very primitive manner. But I need not apologise for that, inasmuch as it is my business to place before the reader the real pictures of life and manners—rough, crude, sometimes half-naked, but always *natural*.

A HINDU CASTE MEETING.

THÁKAR KHOKHRÁ, THE SHETT (*smoking opium from his hubble-bubble*).—" Brothers, it has come to my ears that some of us here assembled are children of the devil."

MANHORDÁS (*ardent reformer*).—" Yes, father!"

THÁKAR KHOKHRÁ.—" Why should it be so, my son ?"

MANHORDÁS.—“Father, if thou wilt forgive thy *chhoru* (child), Ill speak.”

RANGILKÁKÁ (*a gay widower*).—“Yes, Manhorbhái, tell the truth and *shame the*——”.

MANHORDÁS.—“Well, then, we are going to the——,as Khokhrá *bápá* says, because we would rather follow the——than such a Maharáj as Chandoolálji.”

LÁDUBHAT (*orthodox priest*).—“Shut up your mouth, shut up your mouth; you are to-day a Sudháráwálá (reformer), but did you never worship the Mahápurusha?”

MANHORDÁS.—“Never.”

LÁDUBHAT.—“I have myself seen you kissing the sacred foot on the 6th of Vaishak.” (Cries of “Shame! Shame!” “The hypocrite!”)

MANHORDÁS.—“It is false. I can prove it false.”

KHOKHRÁ SHETT.—“Prove it, young man.”

MANHORDÁS.—“Because on the 5th of Vaishák the Maharája's toe was bitten by rats, whilst he lay exhausted after a frolic. Dr. Bhau Daji* could prove it.” (Hisses and groans and uproar.)

* Our most accomplished Hindu physician and scholar of Bombay—died in 1872.

THÁKAR KHOKHRÁ (*upsetting the hubble-bubble*).—" You shameless infidel ! I have put you out of caste ! !"

VESHADHÁRI (*a man who loves "widow-freedom" in private and hates it in public*).—" I declare that Manhordás is a Kristan* fellow. He is *vetlel* (convert). What are these Sudháráwálás ? One cheats widows out of their portions ; another keeps a number of widows in his house under show of protection ; a third gambles and becomes a bankrupt : they become Sudháráwálá to please the *Saheb loques*, and that way assume importance. They are the thieves and pirates of society. Shame upon their birth ! "

MANHORDÁS.—" Don't make me speak out, Veshadhári. I know you and the widows of your family."

VESHADHÁRI.—" They are your *mothers*, you rascal ! "

MANHORDÁS.—" Ah ! they never *keep* their children ! "

VESHADHÁRI (*losing temper*).—" Oh, you slanderer, murderer ! Is not your widowed sister a witch ? "

MANHORDÁS (*relapsing into street-arabism*).—" Your daughter, your sister, your mother ! "

* Christian.

VESHADHÁRI.—“Your aunt, your grandmother—were they not Mahomedans?”

MANHORDÁS.—“And can you swear who is your father?”

VESHADHÁRI.—“Yes, and I can also swear who *your* real father is. Now, will you fight it out, you malicious liar?”

THÁKAR KHOKHRÁ (*waking from his nap and falling back upon the hubble-bubble*).—“Is the business before the meeting over?”

MANHORDÁS.—“No; you must listen to me.”

KHOKHRÁ SHETT (*striking his belly*).—“I will listen to this first. It is time for supper. I have put you out of caste, also all your family and friends, unless you do the proper penance in time, and give three caste dinners of *ghee* and mango juice. So long as I live I will trample upon Sudhárá. I am not such a fool as to pretend to be wiser than my fathers. Return home in peace, my children, and may the blessing of the Mahápurusha be with the faithful!”

SPORTS AND PLAYS.

Nothing could be a fairer index to the social character of a people than the sports and games that obtain among them; and nothing could

afford a greater scope for comparison than the plays common to two nations. There are a good many popular sports in Gujarát, indoor and outdoor, which one reads of in English books on the subject, though, as is to be expected, we in India have no record of our own—no sporting literature to speak of. As this is not meant to be a learned essay, I must hurry on to the plays and games sacred to Gujarát. Kite-flying is perhaps the most popular among these. It is in favour with all classes. From boys of seven to elderly youths of seventy, the Gujarátis enjoy the pleasures of kite-flying. Paper kites are made of many shapes and sizes, sometimes so big that a child, holding the string, may be carried away by the force of the fragile *aéronaut* frisking in the air. During the kite-flying season there is a rage after the sport, and it gives rise to bets and wagers *ad libitum*. Of the two or more prize-fighters he who flies his kite the highest wins. At times there are regular kite-fights; the two combatants in the skies are brought into contact after a good deal of military manœuvre, one taking the offensive and the other standing on defence, and that which is torn, broken, pinned to a roof or drowned into a well or pond, or otherwise damaged, is set upon by the street boys

from whom the owner will exert his utmost to save his kite. The sport is very keenly followed, and the kite that has lost the day has poor chance of escape from the street urchins who give it a hot chase and finally capture it, to carry off as a trophy to the enemy's camp. The scramble leads to accidents at times, boys in pursuit tumbling down roofs and galleries. But in spite of such mishaps kite-flying is looked upon as a jolly good sport. It is an aid to the sight, steadies the hand and sharpens the presence of mind.

Next in vogue is *Gilidándá*, something like cricket, which has now almost entirely superseded the indigenous sport. So much for your wicked English rule ! Then there are the running, jumping (leapfrog), swimming, riding (the hobby horse) and climbing sports ; also racing, especially in bullock carts. There is the *Chor-Kotwal* (Thief and Magistrate), *Nasogoso* (Blind-man's buff) and a number of athletic sports. There are the marble and the top for the small boys, and night plays, one set for the dark half of the month, another set for moonlit nights, for grown-up youths. Among domestic games we have cards and dice often played for heavy stakes, from the player's money, house, up to

his wife. Breaking of sugar-canes on the wrist and striking of two eggs against each other are among plays reserved for the wet weather.

Women have their special indoor amusements besides some of the games abovenamed, the favourites being swinging, *Garba* singing, story-telling and examining one another's hair. There are no outdoor games, of course, for women.

ARTS AND INDUSTRIES.

In the matter of arts and industries Gujarát has lost much of its former importance by reason of the general poverty of the people, want of encouragement, and the competition of cheap machine-made articles. Still, there are a few kinds of loom-made cotton cloth, excellent in design and texture, which the outturn of the European factory can scarcely rival. Gujarát can also show silk and embroidered work—*Kinkhob* for instance—more or less in the hands of Mahomedans and Hindus—for which the province has always been famous. You may see good pottery work in some parts, rough soap, glass, beads, &c. There is some slight business in the cutting and setting of precious stones, too. Among the more curious little crafts is *Kusti*-weaving

by Parsi women, in which they may defy the deftest seamstress in Europe. Surat has a brisk trade in what are popularly known as “work-boxes” and other elegant nicknacks in sandalwood, ivory, &c. The work turned out by Mr. Bhamgara is in much request, and is sent out to various parts of India, and, latterly to Europe and America. This is a very meagre account I have given ; but as a rule the spirit is being crushed out of Native arts and industries in Gujarát, and one scarcely feels reconciled enough to cheap imitations and degenerate originals, to go into raptures. To the European visitor to Surat I may recommend a taste of its barfi and khutai, of its cream cheese and real butter-biscuit, not the lumps of clay we get in Bombay. The khutai prepared by old Nusserwanji Shaer, as good an innkeeper as was ever born, had something in it to tempt the most capricious appetite.

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HOLIDAYS.

A HASTY glance at some of the national holidays of Gujarát may not be an unfitting conclusion to our itinerary. Chief among Hindu holidays is, of course, the far-famed

DIWÁLÍ.

No description of Diwáli would be complete that did not extend from nine days before Dasará to fifteen days after Diwáli proper. The holiday preceding Dasará is called *nava rátri*, "nine nights," which in vulgar parlance has come to be called *nortá*.

These nine nights are sacred to *garbás*, popular songs sung in the streets of Gujarát. A few oil-lamps are placed on a lampholder in the centre of an area, close to which are placed a virgin pair—"a bonny youth and maiden fair." About these a bevy of from twenty to sixty women of all ages circle round and round, taking up a refrain, and often repeating in chorus a verse sung by one and, at times, two women, keeping time to the clap of hands. These *garbás* are evanescent scintillations of the

genius of Dayáram, the Byron of Gujarát. The hero of the songs is mostly Krishna, the lord of 16,000 *gopikás** who are maddened by love of him, who are drawn to the "nourisher of our souls" by the enchanting tones of his *murlí*† in the by-lanes of Brindában, and who fly to him at early morn—one "slipping from her husband's side," another "leaving the morning duties undone," and a third without "suckling her babe," all with tumultuous delight, panting, perspiring, and half naked! There, in the wilderness of unbought love, they meet him, the "soul-subduer," and in converse with him their souls "drink delight." This legend is asserted to be no more than a poetical portraiture of the passionate yearning the soul feels towards her Maker—a feeling that surpasses in intensity the love we feel for children or parents, even that selfish and vehement longing we have for "the flesh of our flesh, the bone of our bone." This harmless legend is worked by Dayáram into various orgies of songs whose luscious sweetness and witchery of style have done more than any other social vagaries to perpetuate the horrors of those dens of iniquities, the Vaishnava Mahárájas' Mandirs. In this respect Dayáram's poetry works in Gujarát as

* Cowherdresses.

† Flute.

“procuress of the lords of Hell.” But the days of street *garbás* in Gujarát are numbered. Surat was head-quarters of these midnight songs, and attracted, during the *nava rátri*, visitors from outlying places, even from so far as Bombay.

To be allowed to join a *garbo* was an honour, and none but your Langtrys and Wests* could claim the privilege. The ambitious songstress must have a figure like the cypress, her eyes a pair of young lotuses, her mouth a full moon, her teeth a row of pearls or pomegranate seeds, her breath like citron, her lips corals, her forehead virgin marble, her nose the parrot’s beak, her hair like the graceful *nágavel*,† her cheeks dimpled love-gardens, her chin a sloping meadow, her neck like the swan’s, her breast like the dove’s, her waist like a liquid jet, her feet like moonbeams playing at hide-and-seek, and her dance must be like the peacock’s! Her laugh must be a shower of *mogras*,‡ her voice sweet but varied, now simmering like the soft undulating bubbles in a bowl of Cyprian wine, then roaring and splashing like the giant Niagara, now warbling like the silver flute of a Circassian *houri*, then thundering like the

* The two far-famed English beauties.

† Betel plant.

‡ Jasmine flowers.

war-drum of a fierce Amazon ! For months and months was the pure virgin soul saturated with sweet, silly, domestic legends, and thus prepared to take part in the *garbás*.

But those scenes are now, happily, visions of the past. In place of the lovely, sylph-like Hinduáni*—the maiden who blushes as she smiles at her heart's happiness in having been allowed to join the street song, and whose guileless glance enthralled a crowd of gay butterflies—you have now the substantial matron, with her brown little progeny pulling at her skirts, whose voice is formed all for gutturals, and whose charms are only for the meek husband to admire.

GARBÁS SUNG BY MALES.

In other places, especially in temples, you have males keeping up the *garbás*—Banias and Bháthias swaying backwards and forwards their fat inelastic carcases, ogling one another, and making night hideous with their vociferous howls and hand-clapping. I know several influential Hindu merchants, Government officials, and even ministers of Native States, joining in the incongruous buffoonery. At Bombay you have little of street *garbás*, except

* Hindu lady.

those sung by the gipsies for hire. These are wanton wanderers of the lowest order, going about from street to street and asking the housewives, "Will you have the *garbo* sung, ladies?" The songs are rude, disjointed snatches stolen from here and there—a sort of patchwork poetry, sacred to *Amba Bhawáni*.*

THE DASARÁ.

At the end of *Navarátri* you have the Dasará. This is a grand national holiday, commemorating the event of the mighty heroes, the Pandavas,† having girded their loins against their cousins, the Kaurawas.† But the Dasará, and, in fact, the whole range of days from *Navarátri* to *Kártiki Purnimá*, is more a social than a religious holiday. It is the national harvest holiday. Pity such an interesting holiday has not yet been immortalised by any local bard. Dasará is a most auspicious day for sending children to school, for generals marching against the enemy, &c. The housewife gets up that morning before the cock crows, cleans and sweeps and scours the house, chanting a simple hymn the same time in subdued tones, lest that sluggard of

* The Mahratta type of the dread goddess Káli.

† The heroes of the Mahábhárata.

her husband be disturbed in his slumbers. She is assisted by her daughter, if the domestic circle is blessed with any such "phantom of delight." There is nothing more beautiful in the home life of the Hindu than the love between mother and daughter. Through thick and thin, through good report and evil report, the two cling to each other at every and any sacrifice. As soon as the master of the house gets up, there is uproarious bustle all around. The metal gods and ornaments are furbished up, the domestic pets are fondled and decorated with flowers, and the horse is presented with a new harness. Later on in the day the father performs the *havana* ceremony, feeding the fire with *ghee* and grain, and, with his children, goes to a tree called *shami* or *som-patra*, worships it, picks or purchases a leaf of it, goes to his friends, embraces them and gets embraced (a regular bear-hug), returns home, partakes of holiday dainties, making a sly compliment now and then to the poor drudge of a wife who waits upon her "lord" while at dinner, and then goes to bed.

DHAN TERASA AND KÁLI CHAODASA.

Twenty days after Dasará is Diwáli. It commences on the 12th of the dark part of the

month. That day is Vágha Bárasa or *Guru Dwádashi*. The day after Bárasa is *Dhan Teras* or *Dhan Trayodashi*, when the merchant brings together his hoards into one room, and after gloating over the heap, offers prayers to it, sprinkles it with red ochre, and kneeling, requests the presiding deity not to take unto her wings. The deity presiding over wealth is Lakshmi. Then comes *Káli Chaoodasa* or *Narka Chaturdashi*, observed in honour of Vishnu's victory over Narakásura. The most effective illumination is on this or the following day. The housewife gets up early in the morning, sets a lamp burning in each nook and corner of the house, rubs herself and children, and even her lord, with ointment, and performs hot-water ablutions. The hotter the liquid the greater the efficacy of the prayer following. No little urchin in the house can escape a good smothering bath, and happy he whose skin does not peel off under the operation. The mistress of the house then performs *árti* with a lamp in a brass plate in her hand, and receives various presents.

DIWÁLÍ PROPER.

Next day is Diwáli proper. The day is sacred to Saraswati, goddess of learning, when all the

shop papers are solemnly worshipped. The worship is called Vahipujá. The family priest, a "little round fat oily man of God," requests Saraswati Mátá on this day not to desert his client. The merchant opens new accounts, new branches of his firm, and new business, on the auspicious day. These are public ceremonies; there are private doings, too, on the occasions, drinking, gambling, and revelling. In these games the Hindu is joined heartily by the Parsi and the Mahomedan. Diwáli illuminations are enjoyed by all classes, young and old, rich and poor. The vast multitude of a hundred nationalities surging up the thoroughfares, like the waves of the ocean, in all colours of the rainbow, each heart bent upon enjoying the present, and each face beaming with the enjoyment, must be a magnificent sight indeed. No one feature of the night is perhaps more attractive than the different head-gears—the Parsi "surgarloaf," the European "chimney-pot," and the Mahratta "cart-wheel." The glory of Diwáli holidays is now almost gone. But even in these degenerate days the Hindu merchant is able to show you a decidedly larger margin on Diwáli than the Parsi or the Mahomedan. And this, not because the Hindu has greater sagacity or enterprise, but because the Parsi

or the Mahomedan knows not what a large revenue parsimony is to the merchant.

Next to her marriage day and the day on which she becomes a mother, Diwali is the most welcome occasion to the Hindu girl. The poor weary heart has then some glimpses of sunshine; it is full of song and sweetness, and of the thousand little charities peculiar to the sex. Two days after the Diwáli is the Bhaubij day, a holiday reminding you of patriarchal times and customs. On this day all members of the family are drawn towards the warmth of the family hearth; brothers gone to other towns on business, sisters gone to their husbands', uncles, nephews, aunts, nieces, all meet at home. The wife is nowhere this day. She must make room for her husband's sister, who cooks his food and serves him with it. In return she gets presents from him before returning to her husband's.

THE KÁRTIKI PURNIMÁ—A TREMENDOUS GOD-FIGHT.

The last of the holidays is *Kartiki Purnimā*. It celebrates the victory of Shiva over the demon Tripurásura. The monster, once upon a time, grew so unmanageable that Brahma and

the other gods, whom he had driven out of Swarga, were obliged to seek redress of Shiva, the Destroyer. Shiva received this deputation of deities with courtesy, and promised to make short work of their common foe. One fine morning the mighty Destroyer sallied forth. No one can say that our warrior went ill-equipped. The Earth was his chariot, with the Sun and the Moon as its wheels. No less a god than Brahma was made his Jehu ; the Himálaya mountain served him as his bow, the Serpent King as his bow-string, and Vishnu himself as his quiver ! Tripurásura fought Shiva manfully, but even *he* could not long cope with the Destroyer thus equipped. The worshippers of Shiva promote a splendid fair on the anniversary of this renowned pre-historic battle. At Bombay the fair is held at Wálkeshwar. At Surat you have it at Ashwinikumar, a neighbouring village.

THE KHIÁLS OF SURAT.

The Surat fair was enlivened by the singing of Khiáls, rhymed romances and philosophical or polemic songs. There are two schools of Khiáls, the Turráwálás and the Kalgiwálás. The first worship the male essence as the prime

cause, the second the female power. This is the bone of contention. The founders of the two schools are said to have been Tukangir and Allábux. Both claim divine origin and divine inspiration. Both had miraculous powers, such as bringing down rain, causing eclipses, and even reviving the dead. This used to be centuries ago, and we had better not be too inquisitive about such miraculous doings. About fifty years ago the two schools were represented by Bahádursing and Allibháí. The former was a Pardesi,* the latter a Borá. Both were illiterate. The first served as gate-keeper for Rs. 7 a month, the second eked out a precarious existence by patching up old gunny-bags. What would Carlyle have said to this? Men who could answer, in *impromptu* verse, the most intricate questions of metaphysics, who could thus hold forth at public meetings for a week and a fortnight: illiterate, ill-favoured men "building the lofty rhyme" with the rapidity with which fairies build enchanted castles! Few know of the struggles of these heroic souls, the "mute inglorious Miltons" of India—men like Kabir † and

* North-India man, or stranger.

† The great Sikh Reformer.

Nának,* Sahajánand,† Tukáram,‡ and Bahádursing and Allibháí.

The Kalagiwálás were remarkable for their “linked sweetness,” a lively fancy, and all those lovable little arts which suit and adorn the sex. The Turráwálás, on the other hand, were known for the vigour and solidity of their productions. From their lips flowed “wisdom married to immortal verse.” Both schools have now sunk in obscurity, and thus one great charm of the Diwáli holidays has fled Gujarát.

* Founder of the Sikh faith.

† The great Gujarát Reformer.

‡ The great Mahratta Poet and Reformer.

THE INIMITABLE RĀMAYAN.

RAMA, SITA, LAXAMAN.

ANOTHER attractive feature of the Diwāli holiday is the recitation of the epic of Rāmāyan. I had the most enjoyable time of it at Baroda when listening, for a few hours every evening, to recitations from the Rāmāyan.

I here read the Rāmāyan, the Iliad, the Shāhnámeh, and other masterpieces of human thought, but none in the original. I never advanced much in the learned languages, though I attempted all by turn. I remember having taken up my friend Professor Bhandárkar's *First Book of Sanskrit*, to keep off the awful sensation one feels when conscious, for the first time, of having a baby at home. But baby was obstinate that night in mistaking me for the mother. I loved Sanskrit, and I loved baby, too, in a sort of way. What was I to do? Oh, happy thought! I put baby on the table, and tried to soothe it to slumber with excellent Sanskrit conjugations. But it was no use—baby conjugated with me in

chorus. Now came the time to decide, and I foolishly decided to give up Sanskrit. You do enough for one man if you can manage a new baby. It is a terrible task, especially for absent-minded students. You take the little being up with a shiver of anxiety lest it should melt in your hands, or lest it should slip through your fingers; or lest, in deep brown study, mistaking it for a plaything, you should put it out of the window. Then, again, you have the presence of the mother to disturb your peace of mind—the mother who sleeps with one eye eternally open. Oh, it is a sad-denying thing! But one must do one's duty. Babies take very kindly to me, except when I am hungry, at which time they avoid me with that instinct of self-preservation which is the first law of our nature. Well, then, if I gave up Sanskrit, you see it was not on a flimsy pretext.

POPULAR RECITATIONS OF THE NATIONAL EPIC.

But to return to the recitation of the Rámáyana at Baroda. These popular recitals from the epic are done into Gujaráti in easy, flowing, narrative verse. I have often listened to them, and always with increasing interest. I think the Gujaráti rendering is by Premá-

nand, the sweetest of our bards, and an inhabitant of Baroda. It is read out by an intelligent Brahmin to a mixed audience of all classes and both sexes. It has a perceptible influence on the Hindu character. I believe the remarkable freedom from infidelity which is to be seen in Hindu families, in spite of their strange gregarious habits, can be traced to that influence. And little wonder.

Every true lover of poetry knows what the Rámáyan is. It is a work for all times, for all men. I have read poetry of various ages and of various climes, and it is my deliberate opinion that in the field of ancient literature, so rich in imperishable prose and verse, the Rámáyan stands pre-eminent. It appears to me to be the greatest of intellectual efforts of its kind, inasmuch as it has moulded the character of perhaps the mightiest nation of antiquity. One can hardly believe it to be the work of a mortal. I have faith in the efficacy of lifelong prayer and contemplation—contemplation of the eternal God, the Source of all Knowledge. And thus I can see nothing unnatural in Válmiki* having been inspired by Heaven, after such a life of contemplation, to write the

* Supposed author of the epic.

Rámáyan, a work which has been the most precious and the most cherished heritage of the Aryas, though the Mahábhárat is a greater favourite in Gujarát. William Gladstone, the greatest Englishman of our day, has done much to enlighten the student on the life and times of his favourite author. Had he studied the Rámáyan, he, and Europe with him, would have known infinitely more of India in every way than at present. Yet Horace Wilson, William Jones, and others, too many to name and too distinguished to need being named, have rendered conspicuous service to this branch of Hindu literature; and the Hindus will cherish their memory to the latest hour of their national existence. The records of ancient literature give evidence of the wondrous energy of thought and expression the old masters commanded; but none equals Válmiki in depicting those soft little domestic charities which are equally powerful to heal the wounds and bruises of severe misfortune and to soothe the wrinkles of every-day care. Works there are in India, to which the human intellect owes much of its refined culture; but none so imbues, so possesses the mind with deep, calm, abiding affection, as the Rámáyan.

HERO AND HEROINE.

Look at the principal characters. There is Laxaman, lesser of the brother heroes of the solar dynasty. His generous heart recoils at the thought of living in ease and comfort when his elder brother is threatened with exile. He is indignant with the step-mother for her arts and machinations ; but, obedient to his brother, he suppresses his wrath, and vows henceforth to renounce the world, and follow the brother and his bride in their forced banishment, humble as a slave, dutiful as a son unto both. Laxaman's bearing towards her he honours with the name of "mother" is extremely touching. Look at Rāma. The loving, dutiful son, the faithful brother, the tender protecting husband, the devoted friend, the magnanimous foe, in every relation of life he realises our ideal of man, while his character as sovereign, "a ruler of men," transcends all his private virtues. The picture drawn by the poet is faultless, absolutely faultless in detail as in the aggregate. And Sitā ? Mistress of a thousand womanly graces—the fond, faithful wife, twice transplanted by relentless fate from the bosom where she had learnt but yesterday to nestle so close—suspected and repudiated.

scorned of the foul-mouthed rabble, left alone by the husband in the trackless desert to the mercy of the fierce beasts and the fiercer elements, leading an aimless, hopeless life ; now exhausted by reason of her loneliness, now cheered by the thought of her precious burden, the pledge of her short-lived union—whose unselfish soul rises superior to all personal discomforts, and who, in the midst of insupportable misery, even in the agonies of travail, has no thought but of her Ráma, “the beloved of my heart, my true, my tender, my eternal lover, who has deserted me because he thought it right” !

Happy the nation who can claim Ráma and Sitá for their ideal. Blessed the hearth at which are offered tributes of national homage to this peerless pair, when the simple children of toil—the rough old artisan, his matter-of-fact dame, and the sweet, simple, romantic girl—mingle tears as the family priest recites some favourite passage out of the sacred volume ! And blessed, thrice blessed the man (if only man he was) whose genius could soar up to the very fount of divine inspiration ; and who could create two beings of such exquisite grace, before whose realistic and ever-enduring nature the works of such literary giants as Homer and

Firdousi sometimes look vague and artificial. With all its varied brilliancy, an Indian student may be pardoned for saying that European genius pales before the fire of Oriental genius, even as the wan and sickly queen of night pales before the glorious lord of day.

THE SANSKRIT LANGUAGE.

Sanskrit is a wonderful language ; almost each word of it has a double meaning, the esoteric and the exoteric. In this respect, as in others, it is the most capable of the world's languages. And when such a poet as Válmiki writes in such a language as Sanskrit, the outcome of his labours must, of course, be inimitable. Each verse of the Rámáyan has a world of hidden meaning. Each simple line, which looks commonplace at first sight, discovers, when carefully studied, an unbroken scene of beauty under the surface, a glorious panorama of sweetness and light, where the reader, drinking his fill of the freshest and healthiest sentiment, forgets himself in the contemplation of the genius that conjures up a creation so perfect in symmetry and proportion. At such times his first thought is to forswear his own namby-pamby puerilities and be content in life with a loving study of the master.

THE BALEVA.

ANOTHER popular Hindu holiday is the Baleva, or *Náliari Punama*, what the Europeans are pleased to call the Cocoanut Day. On this fullmoon day (in August) the violence of the monsoon is supposed to have come to an end, and Father Neptune is supposed to be ready, on the customary propitiations, to allow ships to have a safe voyage. In writing of the Cocoanut holiday, it would not perhaps be amiss to describe the scope and significance of this peculiarly Aryan fruit in shell. What, of all other nuts, it most resembles in form is the human head. It is indispensable on every religious occasion. Its water is considered holy nectar. The hairy surface of its coating goes to make miniature coir purses, bags, &c. The coating or husk itself makes excellent *hukás* or hubble-bubbles. For this purpose the kernel is removed through the "eye" of the nut, which is otherwise kept intact. When broken into two the shell makes good handy

curry or liquor cups and oil vessels. When burnt to cinders and mixed with vinegar or lime, the coating is very good for ringworm and other cutaneous eruptions. If burnt by a certain process, the coating yields an oil which is said to be peculiarly efficacious for the above purpose. Thus far the shell. Its kernel is good for children. Taken with date or molasses, it is excellent food for travellers. It enters into the composition of a hundred dishes, and is much relished alike by Hindus and Mahomedans. Its milk makes a very good hair-restorer, and one may often see Mahomedan and other lads buy a piece of the kernel, chew it, take the fluid in the hollow of the hand, apply it to the hair, and eat the remainder ! Cocoeant oil is used in cooking. The oil is also a mild, pleasant burner. But at religious performances the nut is indispensable. It makes the ambrosia of the gods, if mixed with *ghee* and sugar. When given to strangers, it means welcome ; on the other hand the phrase "to give the cocoeant" means a peremptory and ignominious dismissal, used ironically.

The Cocoeant holiday is a great day in Bombay. Your Gujaráti servants generally become ill a fortnight before the day. You

have to grant them leave, or they will take French leave, without any thought of the future. But this is not because of the Cocconut day; the whole month of Shráwanis a prolonged feast-day; there is a little fair every day of it at Walkeshwar. The Mondays are sacred to the goddess of revelry and song. The Vaisnava Maharájas have the jolliest time of it all through the month.

At Bombay, the Esplanade and Back Bay, and of late years Mody Bay, are worth a visit on *Baleva* day. The fair commences after three, and is kept up till very late. Merchants and traders first go to the sea, propitiate the deity with a cocconut and some flowers duly consecrated. The merchant then receives the Brahman's blessing, with a thread on his wrist, and wends his way homewards through the slow-moving mob, picking up cheap things here and there from the stalls and booths erected on the Esplanade. Some people take a short cruise on the sea by way of first trial; others do the house-warming, and others still have the *nautch* performed. But on the whole, compared with other national festivals, Baleva is a tame affair, as could be guessed. The show is mostly held on the sea-shore, and therefore affords a pic-

turesque spectacle for griffins* and up-country Anglo-Indians.

The most comprehensive of Hindu holidays, so to speak, is the

SHRÁWAN MÁŚ.

In this holy *Shráwan Máś* Hindus of all castes, and of all parts of the country, keep their high carnival. The whole month is a prolonged holiday, with the four Mondays as special red-letter days. To the stranger the *Shráwan* festival is the most innocent and least grotesque of the numerous popular festivals. It resembles the Christmas more than any other Hindu holiday. Members of a family, who may have left the domestic hearth on various purposes, meet again ; old quarrels are made up, the sacred thread is changed, the new dress is put on (in many cases the only new dress of the year), flower and fruit offerings are placed before the gods. Taking your morning constitutional by the Queen's Road (Bombay) you are sure to encounter, during these days, bevvies of Hindu maids and matrons, tripping by, singing softly to themselves, and discussing the

* Fresh-arrived Europeans.

kindness of their respective husbands and mothers-in-law. For, be it remembered, that in this holy season the heart even of the mother-in-law is too joyous to seek quarrels. Here you see a Maráthin, lissome of figure, passing demurely by, with downcast eyes and a gentle cautious tread. She is very lightly, but still always becomingly dressed, this fair daughter of Maháráshtra. Her national *sari* and *choli* sit æsthetically on her graceful person—grace beyond the reach of art. Her raven-black hair is gathered up into a knot at the back of the head, which knot is adorned by a pretty little gold ornament, or a prettier flower of the season.

A few paces behind her is the robustious Márwáran, shuffling past in her cumbrous petticoat. She is a big strapping body, and the tread of her bejewelled foot is extremely assertive. She, or perhaps her lord, has peculiar notions of personal adornment. She throws her *sari* around, or, rather, shrouds herself in her *sari*, till every vestige of her face is invisible. She wears ivory bangles or rings on her arms—both arms are literally covered by these ponderous articles. The palms of her hands and the nails the Márwáran dyes red, and the lips and teeth

black ! Her swathing petticoat she wears so far down as her ankle, and below she has ornaments, silver and brass, or both. The Márwáran is more parsimonious than her lord, and though she is constrained to take some cheap offering to the gods once or twice in the year, she does not scruple to bring part of it back, thus cheating deity itself. The Márwáran is a rare phenomenon in Native society. She is purchased by the husband at a fearful cost. The Márwári does not marry till late in life. He comes to Hindustan, or the Deccan, only with his *dhoti** and his *loti*.† After ten years or so he goes home to see his mother. As long as a relative is alive, the Márwári does not care for a wife. But when he has accumulated "a sum," and when he sees he is waxing old, he invests a good slice of his fortune in a wife. But she is a luxury in the buying only. As soon as that is over, the husband never repents him of the bargain. For, whatever mathematicians might think of it, it is a well-known fact that the Márwári and the Márwáran between them spend exactly a half of what the Márwári used to spend singly. This may be a lesson to Miss Susie Trots, the railway-guard's wife. The Márwáran is not visible to the vulgar

* Waist garment.

† A small brass ewer.

gaze, except during the *Holi* holidays. She is then in her element. She squirts paint and water on the gallants that serenade her, and gives them back joke for joke with the keenest relish. All this while her face is veiled. In fact, few young Márwárans are seen unveiled.

But by no fair Hinduáni are the joys of the *Shráwan Máś* drunk with such avidity as by your Vaishnava lasses—the Bháttia and Baniá females. To them it is a month of love and liberty. And, thanks to the pious Mahárájas, the month passes as swiftly as a dream. Wife, widow, and maiden, each has the jolliest time of it in *Shráwan*. There are the dances to be danced before the Maháráj, plays to be played, songs to be sung, his Holiness to be washed and dressed and fed. Oh, the joys of *Shráwan*!—to the Vaishnavas. The beauteous *Shráwan Máś*, when the days are devoted to singing and when the fair Rádhá* is fluttered by a whirlwind of love. “All fair sisters go to the Jamna for holy ablutions, their foreheads adorned with *Kesari*,† and their graceful feet coloured. The fair ones worship *Gowri*, with wreaths and flowers in one hand, in the other

* The beloved of Krishna. † Saffron.

hand the box of *Kunkun* colour, and the name of *Shri Gopál* on their lips. Four *pohoras** the lovely ones devote to singing songs, forsaking sleep; the night is short, and the sports are long. Oh, I tremble lest the envious morn soon breaks in upon our joys!" So sings the fair daughter of Gujarát.

The PARSI has many holidays, but none of such religious import as the Hindu, unless it be the Muktád.

THE MUKTÁD HOLIDAYS.

Muktád reads like a Zend word, closely allied to Sanskrit, and means the "saved," or "released." It alludes to what the Occidentals call "emancipated spirits." *Doslá* is a *Prákrit* Hindu term, and means, if anything, "the old fellows," what English newspapers call "the venerable departed worthies." This is the origin: Muktád is of Pagan growth, no way belonging to Zoroastrianism, pure and simple. Zoroastrians in Iran, over twelve hundred years ago, had between five and ten days set apart every year for prayers and fasting, as expiation for their own sins, and more as offerings

* A Pohora equals three hours.

for repose of the souls of their relatives. But all this is changed in India. The praying is changed at times into gambling, and the fasting into feasting. The simple ceremonial seems to have sunk into a gross and debasing pagan rite.

Twenty years ago (the Parsis have since improved) this was the explanation of the *Doslá* holidays:—Those of our departed relatives, who had behaved themselves on earth, and therefore were admitted to Heaven, were allowed every year a long holiday for eighteen days to return to earth and live with their earthly friends. There are proofs positive of these “spirits” having visited our grandmothers and mothers-in-law (in their dreams, of course), and having told them what good things of earth they would like to have for their creature comforts during their holiday sojourn here below. Their wants were often unconfined. But generally they consisted of the following:—Brand-new clothes, various dishes of fowl, fish, and fruit; good country wine and toddy, and, in short, all those things they had a relish for during their earthly existence. They also required things for amusement, such as paper kites, tops, packs of cards, &c. This is how the

dear ones were received : The best room in the house was reserved for them ; it was washed, scoured, and furnished with pictures. In the centre was placed a many-branched iron frame; on the top of the frame was placed a tray of choicest flowers (the only redeeming feature in this heathen show); along with the flowers there were fruits. On all sides of the frame were placed metal pots filled with crystal water, by virgins, female and male. Surrounding the frame, on the floor, were arranged steaming dishes of edibles and rows of favourite playthings. The priest consecrated the food and other things, and took a mouthful from every dish (a full distended priestly mouth seldom measures under 3 inches by 4), he then declared the feast open to the enjoyment of the spirits visitant. These entered the room unperceived, except by the priest and the grandmother or mother-in-law; they washed themselves with the water, and fell to. This degrading farce was carried on for eighteen days, three times a day. Many Parsi families have got rid of the superstitious part of the ceremony, but still it lingers on. The whole thing is intended for the good of two, the priest and the cook. The eighteen days are a carnival to these fellows. To the *pater-*

familias, and his son, who is an unemployed graduate of the University, they are the worst days in the year. The old gentleman has to spend his cash without stint, and the young gentleman has to submit every now and then to the bitter reproaches of his progenitor, who turns fiercely upon him and says: "See, you idle unskilful vagabond! Look at that barber* of a cook; we have to pay him Rs. 30 for eighteen days, and he knows not how to make an omelet. And you, sirrah, you are what they call a B. A. and M. A., and your education alone has cost me Rs. 5,000. And what do you earn? Nothing. Oh, why did not your mother re-marry before you were born!" The old man is justified in complaining, though the logic of his concluding remark is too Hibernian. And who can help pitying the poor "B.A. and M. A."?

But look at the rotund Mobed. How busy he is! What a roaring trade he drives! Though he visits a dozen houses in swift succession, there is only one room for him at every house, and that is the well-stocked prayer room, "the Mecca of his appetite." He lives in "a paradise of pies and puddings." He prays, eats,

* An utterly useless fellow.

and sleeps; sleeps, eats, and prays. While muttering the meaningless prayer, his eyes are on the solids—"the substantials, Sir Giles, the substantials." The jargon he mutters is *dry*, "so he moistens his words in his cups." And when, with his inner man thus fortified, he proceeds to prayers, "his words are of marrow, unctuous, dropping fatness." He is a droll fellow, this Parsi levite, and laughs over the folly of those on whose substance he fattens. He has materials in him of a good divine and a scholar, but he is born in an atmosphere of hollow imposture and sham, and lives and dies a cheat and a charlatan. To this man is due the invention of the haze of superstition which envelops the pure and simple form of worship bequeathed to us by the Prophet-Priest of Iran.*

The MAHOMEDAN holiday of the year, if holiday it may be called, is the Mo'haram.

THE MO'HARAM.

"Hai Hassan, Hai Hussein," are the wails of genuine grief that pierce the air of Imám-bará on Mo'haram night. "Hai Hassan, Hai Hussein," form the interlude to the tou-

* Zoroaster.

ching national elegy, recited to the echo of frantic breast-beating, by sturdy, hard-favoured Moguls' and Seedies (African Mussalmans), who abandon themselves for the nonce to uncontrollable woe. It is the last night of the Passion week throughout Islam, when the Shehá Moslem enacts his Passion Play, and the Sooni Mahomedan keeps up his high carnival. In the month of Mo'haram, "holiest of the holy," eight days are sacred to the memory of Hassan and Hussein, grandsons of the Prophet by his beloved daughter Fátimâ, and his no less beloved disciple, Ali. The youthful heroes are said to have fallen victims to partisan fury. The Shehás, by all accounts the true believers, who acknowledge Ali as heir and successor to the Founder of Islam, spend the early part of the week in erecting the *taboot*, the paper mausoleum which is supposed to hold the murdered hopes of the Prophet's house, in reading the *fáthiá*, the initial verses of the Koran, before it, and in other religious rites. On a raised seat squats the venerable Mohla, surrounded by the Hadjees and other dignitaries and elders of the Moslem Church; and at a distance squat crowds of the faithful. To the breathless audience the voice of the Mohla is "more

than the miraculous harp." In tones of intense anguish does he recite the tale of woe—how one of the heroes was poisoned by the foul assassin at Yezd, how the other was slaughtered by the dastard soldiery of Damascus, on the field of Kerbalá. In the course of the recital the High Priest lays solemn emphasis on an incident here and there, swaying his portly person backward and forward. At such times his deep-drawn sigh generally makes itself heard at a distance—a sigh that seems "to shatter his bulk." This prolonged inspiration is taken up by the audience, converted into a loud sob, a united but discordant groan, decidedly more striking to the ear than harmonious. Here the agonised spirit finds vent in moans of "Hai Hassan! Hai Hussein!" Here ply the brawny hands on the livid breast—a cruel torture unfelt, owing to the self-abandonment of the hour—though to the onlooker the breast is a piece of raw flesh besprinkled with the vital fluid. Then supervenes a simultaneous hush as the Mohla's lips are observed quivering in a painful effort to speak. The sigh is subdued, the pain endured in silence. The grief surging up the breast empties itself at the eyes. It is not the hired lip-homage of the Hindu mourner, this *Marsiá*:

song of the Moslem. The cold philosophy of the fatalist is nowhere this evening. His emotion has usurped the seat of reason. Here are no external "trappings and suits of woe"—the grief is genuine, of and in the heart. Given the time, the place, the frantic enthusiasm of the Moslem nature, and the awfulness of the tale of murder and assassination; the veriest day-drudge will develop into a hero and a patriot, the most arrant coward will raise himself into a sympathising martyr. Wonderful is the influence of Islam on the believer's mind; and a faith that has such a hold on men's minds will endure with the sun. It was years ago I first witnessed the *Marsiá*, and in other places than the Imámbará of Bombay. It was in Gujarát, and in early youth; but the impression still remains, in spite of the assertion of the half-true poet, that "youth holds no fellowship with woe."

The Soonis, that is, the Indian converts to Islam, get up a frightful caricature of the proceeding. They look upon Hassan and Hussein (*Anglice*, Hobson Dobson) as pretenders. If you speak to a Sooni of the premature death of the brother-heroes, he will reply in mock sympathy "Pity they died not earlier." This is

mortal offence to the parties concerned, but as the dead feel no resentment, their friends, the Moguls and other Shehás, take up the cudgels for them. Hence bleeding noses, broken pates and other paraphernalia of carnage. The hatred the two sects bear each other is imperishable. The Sooni's idea of the holiday is to make merry at his rival's expense. He keeps up mad revels all these days exactly in proportion to the intensity of the Shehá's mourning. He will become a monkey, a bear, a tiger, an old hag, a mock Mohlá, a pious dust-begrimed Dervish, a street dancer, anything and everything, in fact, except a respectable human being. If he is well-to-do he enters on a career of indiscriminate hospitality, where the invitation to the guests is in the golden language of the ancients, "Drink or depart." I need not say that many prefer the former alternative. When he comes out into the street, with his very much mixed following, he looks "a king of shreds and patches." Altogether, the Sooni makes a discreditable figure during the sacred season which he converts into a saturnalia. But he is little to blame, poor fellow. Government don't seem so anxious to dispel his mental fog, his own people won't wash and clean him. There is no Jamsetjee

Jeejeebhoy institution for him. He won't respect law, because, he looks upon law as a *hocus-pocus*. Who interprets the law to him? It is rather unjust, therefore, to think Kásam is always rife for treason. Why, he could not commit treason even if he wished, because he has no soul. I am quoting political philosophy. And as for judgment, why, sir, Kásam has not the judgment of a malt horse. Sir, he has not so much as "a thought in his belly," so utterly barren he is. He will chat and strut bravely. I allow he will pluck the moon out of her sphere, *if she let him*.

Perhaps the most popular, though certainly not at all reputable, of Gujarát holidays, is the

UNHOLY HOLI.

Holi is not a holy institution wholly, but it is a jolly old holiday nevertheless. It is the season of free love and free language, not only among the Vaishnavas, but the lower castes of Gujarát, the saturnalia of indecent song, the carnival of mad carousal. It is the season of *rang* and *rág*, which two innocent-looking monosyllables the High Court Translator may translate as "red paint and music," but which,

in reality, mean the luxuries of love's embrace, the sporting of *Kama** and *Râti*.† The origin of *Holi* has been a subject of ardent speculation by Native philologists. It ought to be credited with divine beginning, if Hindu antiquaries are to be believed. But as Hindu antiquaries are far too mystic and imaginative for this age, it would be better to be content with a more rational genesis. It is this: Once upon a time, when civilisation was not, there lived in a certain nagri‡ a great Bania sowcâr—a merchant prince, opulent as Cræsus. This great sowcâr, we are told, had an immense lot of goods and chattels, an immense lot of servants and slaves, an immense lot of wives and hand-maids. But he had no heir to perpetuate his name. By dint of prayers and penances he, however, prevailed upon the gods to give him a child. This was promised to be a son; but the sowcâr happening to offend one of the deities, he got at last only a daughter. Still he was content. Why, he thought, the gods could have given me anything or nothing! *Their* will be done.

That brings me to the sowcâr with an only daughter. She was a lovely thing, became

* Cupid.

† His partner.

‡ Town.

lovelier as she grew, and at the age of thirteen she was absolutely bewitching. She sat at the window every cool evening, dressed handsomer than Cleopatra, chewing *pán supári* and slyly squirting the red nectar amongst the enthralled crowd below. The marble forehead, the silken tresses, the swan-like neck, those rainbow brows, and those coral lips, set the gallants raving. But who could openly aspire to her hand? Every prodigal son of an impoverished race (and of such are your gallants) was the sowcár's debtor. With what face could he ask for the hand of the sowcár's only daughter, when he had not been able to return a paltry loan of money to the sowcár? Huliká (that was her name) grew in loveliness and loneliness, till one moonlit night she espied a lovable Rajput youth, deep in her father's debt. They looked at each other, their eyes met, their hearts went out to each other, &c., &c. Huliká directly sent her *dasi**, her "dearer than mother," after the youth. A meeting was arranged, and the outlook discussed. Their troths were plighted on the spot. But it was hopeless to win the father over, in whose iron safe was locked up the lover's

* Female attendant.

destiny, in the shape of promissory notes and such other documents of *high interest*. Elopement was the only way, and that the lover proposed. At first Huliká shrank from the proposal; but, like a wise young woman she was, in less than five minutes she succumbed to the arts of the sweet enchanter. Now Huliká was a virtuous Helen, look you; and she therefore took the *dási* (nurse) with them. She left a note for dear papa, stating she was carried away against her wishes, but that she could not survive this vile treatment for a week; however, she had the old maid-servant with her, and that she hoped she would shortly become *suttee* if her honour were not saved. They took a good many valuable nicknacks with them, and with rare temerity took lodgings in the same street. The town was in an uproar in the morning, and the old sowcár instituted a rigorous search in the neighbouring cities. Huliká ascertained that day that, in spite of the innocent little note she had left behind, the women of the town took her to be a party to an elopement. Her virtuous instincts were outraged, and from the depths of her woman's resources she at once evolved a plan by which

her reputation should be saved. She got up at the dead of night, locked the old woman, who was asleep, in the room, locked all doors save one from inside, and coolly set fire to the house in various parts. When she saw no human efforts could save the house, she dressed herself as a *Yogini*,* getting her astonished lover to do likewise. And locking the remaining door from outside, this daughter of Gujarát left the town. A few minutes later the house was found to be on fire. Efforts were made to save it; but before daylight it was all a wreck. In the morning they found the *sowcár's* old *dási* burnt to death, but easy of recognition. Then it was that the wise women of the town proclaimed that *Huliká*, the virtuous, had committed *suttee*, and that the immortal gods had taken her up from the grasp of the cruel but baffled seducer. *Huliká* henceforward came to be recognised as one of the saints; and there was no one, not even the old *dasi*, thanks to *Huliká's* precaution, to contradict the general belief. This is one version of *Holi*, given by the blind bard of Gujarát, but which I, for my part, cannot quite accept.

The *Holi* of the day is supposed to be the

* A female ascetic.

annual celebration of this *suttee* affair. It is a national holiday, and has a wonderful power for demoralisation over the infatuated Vaishnava, the sturdy Mārathá (the lower order only, I believe), and the stingy Márwári. You can, in Bombay, see *Holi* in full swing in two places, the Mahārāja's Mandir and the Márwári Bazar. In the former could be witnessed, for days together, a promiscuous assemblage of worshippers, without distinction of age, sex or social position, revelling in orgies such as the Western reader could hardly realise. Modest young women are submitted to showers of coloured water and clouds of red paint. They are handled to a degree of familiarity incredible to the outside public. At one exhibition like this hundreds of young women are liable to go astray from the inborn modesty of their nature. It is a wonder how, with such social customs as these, the Vaishnavas lead such happy, contented, and respectable lives. But these malign associations of *Holi* are happily dying out. In the streets you may still encounter respectable Vaishnava merchants pelting each other with coloured curd, cow-dung, mud, and such other delectable missiles. But to have a vivid idea of the

wild delirium excited by this holiday one has (in Bombay) to stand for an hour in the Márwári Bazar at Mumbádevi. He can there see what extraordinary social antics the usually sober, money-grubbing Márwári is capable of. How a crowd of these *bháng**-intoxicated bacchanals will besiege a neighbour's zenana, by way of a serenade, I suppose, and shout their rude amorous ditties with significant gestures and attitudes. The filthy epithets, the wanton glances, the obscene gestures, defy description; but these are rewarded, on the part of the Márwáran, by equally shameless retorts and the squirting of red paint. This is the only holiday the stingy sojourner in Gujarát enjoys, according to his lights. Never is the morose Márwári more free, more frolicsome, more abandoned, than on this occasion.

* Hemp-juice.

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